











OF

GEORGE WASHINGTON, •

LE SE WILL

JARED SPARKS.

ABRIDGED BY THE AUTHOR.

VOL. II.



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LIFE

OF



GEORGE WASHINGTON.

CHAPTER XXI.

Spurious Letters written and circulated in the Name of Washington. — Conway's Cabal. — Persons concerned in it. — Honorable and generous Conduct of Lafayette in relation to this Affair.

The command of the American armies, and the responsibilities attending that high office, were not the only causes of vexation, which at this time harassed the mind of Washington. Attempts were made by his public adversaries, and by secret foes wearing the mask of friendship, to destroy his influence and ruin his character.

A pamphlet was published in London, containing a series of letters, purporting to have been written by him in the summer of 1776, and with his signature attached to them. It was stated in the preface, that, when Fort Lee was evacuated, General Washington's servant

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was left behind indisposed; that in his possession was a small portmanteau belonging to the General, in which, among other things of trifling value, were the drafts of several private letters to Mrs. Washington, Mr. Lund Washington, and Mr. Custis; and that these had been transmitted to England by an officer, into whose hands they had fallen. This fiction was contrived to deceive the public into a belief of the genuineness of the letters, although in reality not one of General Washington's servants, nor a single article of his baggage, was taken by the enemy in the whole course of the war. But the tenor of the letters was the most insidious part of the fabrication. Washington is represented as expressing sentiments totally at variance with his conduct, and as deprecating the misguided zeal and rashness of Congress in declaring independence, and pushing the opposition to Great Britain to so perilous an extremity. The letters were reprinted in New York, and industriously circulated in various forms through the agency of disaffected persons. The disguise was too flimsy to cover so nefarious a purpose. Whatever credit they may have gained in England, they could have no influence on his countrymen, who understood his character.

The author of these spurious epistles was never publicly known. They were written with considerable art, and by a person acquainted with many particulars of General Washington's family concerns. It is probable, also, that parts of intercepted letters actually written by him were interwoven. He never thought the subject worthy of his notice, till near the end of his presidency, when a new edition of these same forgeries was palmed upon the public to gratify the spleen of a malignant party spirit, and to effect a purpose even more infamous than the one contemplated by their original author. He then declared them, in a letter to the Secretary of State, to be spurious and false.

Whilst the enemies of his country were thus employed in scattering the seeds of detraction and falsehood, the agents of faction were secretly at work, both in the army and in Congress, to disparage and undermine his reputation. This conspiracy has been called Conway's Cabal, from the name of the individual who acted the most conspicuous part. The other prominent leaders were General Gates and General Mifflin. The causes and origin of the disaffection of these officers to the Commander-in-chief have not been explained. When they joined the service, at the

beginning of the war, they professed to be his friends, and probably were such. It was mainly at his instance, that General Gates received his first appointment. Being an Englishman by birth, some of the members of Congress had scruples on the subject, thinking their cause would be safest in the charge of native Americans, both on account of their influence over the people, and of the ardor and sincerity of their patriotism. These scruples were waved, however, in favor of Gates and Charles Lee, and in each case at the solicitation of Washington, who had confidence in their attachment to American liberty, and believed important aid might be derived from their military skill and experience.

The first symptoms of discontent are supposed to have been manifested at Cambridge. Gates was adjutant-general of the army, with the rank of brigadier. Mifflin went there as aid-de-camp to the Commander-in-chief, by whom, under the authority of Congress, he was appointed quartermaster-general, with the rank of colonel. After the organization of the first Continental army, Gates applied for the command of a brigade, and Mifflin of a regiment. These requests were declined by Washington, on the ground, in the first place, that the duties of their offices required their whole

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attention, and, in the next, that such an indulgence would interfere with the just claims of other officers. This refusal is thought to have given an offence, that was not forgotten. It is certain, that, after the army marched from Cambridge, General Gates made interest with Congress to be employed at a distance from Washington's immediate command, and continued to do so; and the correspondence with him on the part of Gates, made necessary by his official relation to the Commander-in-chief, so far from being cordial and friendly, was marked with "an air of design, a want of candor in many instances, and even of politeness." These are the words of Washington, contained in a letter to the President of Congress three years after the army left Cambridge, and they are verified by the correspondence since published.

Conway, by birth an Irishman, had been in the French service from his youth, and founded his claim to consideration on the circumstance of his being an officer of thirty years' experience. He joined the army at Morristown, having the rank of brigadier, by the appointment of Congress. Of all the men in the world, he was the last to conciliate the favor of Washington. Boastful, presumptuous, and intriguing, bent on pushing his fortune,

and looking only to personal aggrandizement, he was unprincipled in regard to the means and reckless of consequences. Abundant proofs of these traits of character and of sinister aims were exhibited during the campaign; and, when it was rumored that Conway was to be promoted, Washington wrote to a member of Congress a letter of strong remonstrance against it, assigning his reasons without reserve. The success of the northern army, in the capture of Burgoyne, was the signal for the malecontents to assume a bolder attitude in prosecuting their machinations. Anonymous letters were sent to the President of Congress and the Governor of Virginia, filled with insinuations, complaints, and exaggerated statements, and ascribing all the misfortunes of the campaign to the incapacity, or ill-timed Fabian policy, of the Commander-in-chief. It was affirmed, with as much effrontery as falsehood, that his force had been three or four times as large as that opposed to him; and no pains were spared to make it appear, that all his plans and operations evinced a want of military knowledge, judgment, and decision.

These artifices, though practised in secret for a time, were well known to Washington. His scrutinizing observation easily penetrated the designs of those, who acted under the Æт. 45.]

cloak of a pretended attachment; and his real friends, moved not less by a sense of duty to their country, than of justice to him, took care to put him on his guard, and to acquaint him with the intrigues of the cabal, as far as they could be ascertained from overt acts, or inferred from less obvious indications. affair was at length brought to his notice in a definite shape. When Colonel Wilkinson, one of Gates's aids-de-camp, was on his way from Saratoga to Congress, as bearer of despatches announcing the capitulation of Burgovne, he stopped at the quarters of Lord Stirling, who was then at Reading. In a free conversation while there, Wilkinson repeated part of a letter, which Gates had received from Conway, containing strictures on the management of the army under Washington, accompanied with disparaging reflections. Prompted by patriotism and friendship, Lord Stirling communicated to him an extract from the letter as repeated by Wilkinson. A correspondence on the subject followed between Washington, Gates, and Conway. The genuineness of the extract was denied, but the letter itself was never produced. Two or three persons afterwards saw it in confidence, among whom was Mr. Laurens, President of Congress; and, although the words proved not to be exactly the

same, yet the tenor and spirit of the letter were accurately reported. The transaction, and the incidents springing from it, could not long be concealed from the officers of the army. Rumors respecting them went abroad, and the public sentiment was expressed in a tone so unequivocal and decided, as to discourage the instigators; and their schemes were abandoned, before they had produced any of the fatal mischiefs, which must inevitably have followed, if their ambitious hopes had been realized.

There is no reason to suppose, that any of the officers were directly implicated in the cabal, except Gates, Mifflin, and Conway. That a considerable party in Congress favored the projects of these men is evident from the proceedings of that body for several months. After the capitulation at Saratoga, Gates forwarded the official account of the event to Congress, without communicating the intelligence in any shape to the Commander-inchief, which his duty as an officer and the common rules of courtesy required him to do; and Congress never intimated their dissatisfaction with this breach of decorum, and marked disrespect to the commander of their armies, whose authority they were bound to support. Nearly at the same time Congress instituted a new Board of War, to which were granted

large powers, and of which Gates and Mifflin were appointed members, Gates being placed at its head.

One of the first acts of this board was a projected expedition to Canada, planned by Gates, and approved by Congress, without consulting Washington in the least of its particulars. The first intimation he had of it was in a letter from the Board of War, enclosing another to Lafayette, informing him of his being appointed to the command of the expedition. It was the design of this stroke of policy to bring over Lafayette to the interests of the faction. They had little knowledge of his character. He was not to be deceived nor cajoled. He carried the letter to Washington, told him that he saw through the artifice, and should decline. Washington replied, that he knew not the object of the expedition, nor how it was to be carried into effect, but the appointment was an honorable one, which would place him in a conspicuous station, where he would in any event acquit himself with credit; for, if the enterprise should fail, he was persuaded his conduct would be such as to save him from faults and screen him from censure, and the responsibility would rest with its projectors. Yielding to this advice, he acceded to the proposal, went to Albany, where

he had been promised that troops and every thing necessary should be provided, and, after waiting there three months, his patience being exhausted and all his hopes defeated, as the Board of War did nothing to fulfil their promise or promote the expedition, he returned to the camp at Valley Forge.*

And it might here be recorded to the honor of Lafayette, if indeed his whole career in

^{*} Before Lafayette commenced his journey to Albany, he rode to Yorktown, for the purpose of making arrangements with the Board of War. As soon as he arrived, he called on General Gates, whom he found surrounded by his friends seated at a dinner-table. They greeted him with much cordiality. He joined them at the table, the wine passed round, and several toasts were given. Determined not to act under disguise, and to take the first opportunity of letting his sentiments be known, he called to them, just as they were about to rise, and observed that one toast had been omitted, which he would propose. The glasses were filled, and he gave as a toast, "The Commander-in-chief of the American armies." It is needless to say, that it was coldly received; and it is possible, that this early and bold avowal of his predilections had some influence in damping the ardor, with which the leaders of the faction had planned this abortive Canada expedition. Conway was appointed second in command; but Lafayette insisted that the Baron de Kalb, in whom he had confidence, should be one of the officers, which was granted, but not without evident reluctance. Baron de Kalb, being higher in rank than Conway, was thus the second in command, and Conway the third.

America was not a noble monument to his honor, his generosity, and unwavering fidelity to every trust reposed in him, that from the very first he resisted every attempt that was made by the flatteries of Conway, and the artifices of others, to bring him into the league. In the earliest stage of the cabal, before it had been whispered to the public, he wrote to Washington, stating his opinion of Conway, and his fears for the unhappy consequences that might flow from his conduct. "I need not tell you," said he, "how sorry I am at what has happened; it is a necessary result of my tender and respectful friendship for you, which is as true and candid as the other sentiments of my heart, and much stronger than so. new an acquaintance might seem to admit. But another reason for my concern is my ardent and perhaps enthusiastic wish for the happiness and liberty of this country. I see plainly that America can defend herself, if proper measures are taken; but I begin to fear that she may be lost by herself and her own sons." And again in conclusion he added; "My desire of deserving your approbation is strong; and, whenever you shall employ me, you can be certain of my trying every exertion in my power to succeed. I am now bound to your fate, and I shall follow it and

sustain it, as well by my sword as by all the means in my power." To this pledge he was ever true.*

Standing firm in his integrity, Washington took no pains to counteract these machinations of his enemies, and, whatever may have been his regret and indignation at such evidences of ingratitude and perfidy, he did not allow them to disturb his equanimity, or to turn him

^{*} The following extract from a letter written by Lafayette to Baron Steuben, while the faction was at its height, affords an additional proof of his warm and generous friendship for Washington. It was dated at Albany, on the 12th of March, 1778. Baron Steuben had recently arrived in the country.

[&]quot;Permit me," said Lafayette, "to express my satisfaction at your having seen General Washington. No enemies to that great man can be found, except among the enemies to his country; nor is it possible for any man of a noble spirit to refrain from loving the excellent qualities of his heart. I think I know him as well as any person, and such is the idea which I have formed of him. His honesty, his frankness, his sensibility, his virtue, to the full extent in which this word can be understood, are above all praise. It is not for me to judge of his military talents; but, according to my imperfect knowledge of these matters, his advice in council has always appeared to me the best, although his modesty prevents him sometimes from sustaining it; and his predictions have generally been fulfilled. I am the more happy in giving you this opinion of my friend, with all the sincerity which I feel, because some persons may perhaps attempt to deceive you on this point."

in the least degree from his lofty purpose of serving his country in the sphere allotted to him with the disinterestedness, diligence, and ardor, that characterized his public life in every vicissitude of events. In a letter to President Laurens, who had enclosed to him an anonymous communication of a very insidious tendency, which he had received, and which the writer designed for Congress, Washington wrote as follows.

"I cannot sufficiently express the obligation I feel to you, for your friendship and politeness upon an occasion in which I am so deeply interested. I was not unapprized, that a malignant faction had been for some time forming to my prejudice; which, conscious as I am of having ever done all in my power to answer the important purposes of the trust reposed in me, could not but give me some pain on a personal account. But my chief concern arises from an apprehension of the dangerous consequences, which intestine dissensions may produce to the common cause.

"As I have no other view than to promote the public good, and am unambitious of honors not founded in the approbation of my country, I would not desire in the least degree to suppress a free spirit of inquiry into any part of my conduct, that even faction itself may deem reprehensible. The anonymous paper handed to you exhibits many serious charges, and it is my wish that it should be submitted to Congress. This I am the more inclined to, as the suppression or concealment may possibly involve you in embarrassments hereafter, since it is uncertain how many or who may be privy to the contents.

"My enemies take an ungenerous advantage of me. They know the delicacy of my situation, and that motives of policy deprive me of the defence I might otherwise make against their insidious attacks. They know I cannot combat their insinuations, however injurious, without disclosing secrets, which it is of the utmost moment to conceal. But why should I expect to be exempt from censure, the unfailing lot of an elevated station? Merit and talents, with which I can have no pretensions of rivalship, have ever been subject to it. My heart tells me, that it has been my unremitted aim to do the best that circumstances would permit; yet I may have been very often mistaken in my judgment of the means, and may in many instances deserve the imputation of error."

To what extent the members of Congress were concerned in this affair, it would be difficult now to decide. Names have been men-

tioned, but without such a clear statement of facts as to fix a direct charge upon any individual. The proceedings of Congress show, that the faction had supporters in that body; but who they were, or what precise objects they had in view, cannot now be ascertained from the testimony hitherto made public. The first aim of the cabal was, no doubt, to disgust Washington and cause him to resign. It is probable, that Gates's immediate coadjutors in the army looked to him as the successor, and that Gates flattered himself with this The dissatisfied members of illusive dream. Congress, it is more likely, had their eyes upon Charles Lee, who was soon to be exchanged.

Conway was the victim of his ambition and intrigues. Being wounded by an American officer in a duel, he wrote to General Washington while he thought himself near his end, expressing sorrow for his past conduct. "My career will soon be over," said he; "therefore justice and truth prompt me to declare my last sentiments. You are in my eyes the great and good man. May you long enjoy the love, veneration, and esteem of these States, whose liberties you have asserted by your virtues." This confession, dictated at a solemn moment by a corroding conscience, although it may be deemed an apology for personal injuries, can-

not atone for the guilt of having endeavored, in a time of public danger and distress, to kindle the flame of discord in a country, whose liberties he had offered to vindicate, and whose cause he was pretending to serve. He unexpectedly recovered of his wound, and returned to France, leaving a name which few will envy, and an example which no one will be ambitious to imitate, who reflects how soon a crime may be followed by a just retribution.

CHAPTER XXII.

Sufferings of the Army at Valley Forge. — New Arrangements concerted with a Committee of Congress. — Half-pay granted to the Officers for a Term of Years. — Proceedings in Regard to Lord North's conciliatory Bills.

THE winter at Valley Forge is memorable in the history of the war. Owing to changes in the quartermaster's and commissary's departments, according to a scheme planned by Congress contrary to the judgment of Washington, the army had been wretchedly supplied; and at no time were the sufferings of the troops so great, as they were for a few weeks after they went into winter quarters. Hardly were the huts begun, when information was received, that a party of the enemy had left Philadelphia, with the apparent design of foraging and drawing subsistence from the country. Several regiments were ordered to be in readiness to march, when it was discovered that they had no provisions, and that a dangerous mutiny was on the point of breaking out. The only remedy was to send parties abroad to collect, wherever they could find it, as much provision as would satisfy the pressing wants of the soldiers

The same wants recurred at different times through the winter. On one occasion General Washington wrote; "For some days there has been little less than a famine in camp. A part of the army have been a week without any kind of flesh, and the rest three or four days. Naked and starving as they are, we cannot enough admire the incomparable patience and fidelity of the soldiery, that they have not been ere this excited by their sufferings to a general mutiny and dispersion. Strong symptoms, however, of discontent have appeared in particular instances; and nothing but the most active efforts everywhere can long avert so shocking a catastrophe." Such was the scarcity of blankets, that many of the men were obliged to sit up all night by the fires, without covering to protect them while taking the common refreshment of sleep; and in numerous instances they were so scantily clad, that they could not leave their huts. Although the officers were better provided, yet none was exempt from exposures, privations, and hardships.

Notwithstanding this deplorable condition of the army, there were not wanting those, who complained of its inactivity, and insisted on a winter campaign. When the encampment was begun at Valley Forge, the whole number of men in the field was eleven thousand and ninety-eight, of whom two thousand eight hundred and ninety-eight were unfit for duty, "being barefoot and otherwise naked." In making this statement to Congress, and alluding to a memorial of the legislature of Pennsylvania, Washington said; "We find gentlemen, without knowing whether the army was really going into winter quarters or not, reprobating the measure as much as if they thought the soldiers were made of stocks or stones, and equally insensible of frost and snow; and moreover, as if they conceived it easily practicable for an inferior army, under the disadvantages I have described ours to be, which are by no means exaggerated, to confine a superior one, in all respects well appointed and provided for a winter's campaign, within the city of Philadelphia, and to cover from depredation and waste the States of Pennsylvania and New Jersey. But what makes this matter still more extraordinary in my eye is, that these very gentlemen, - who were well apprized of the nakedness of the troops from ocular demonstration, who thought their own soldiers worse clad than others, and who advised me near a month ago to postpone the execution of a plan I was about to adopt, in consequence of a resolve of Congress, for seizing clothes,

under strong assurances that an ample supply would be collected in ten days agreeably to a decree of the State (not one article of which, by the by, is yet come to hand), - should think a winter's campaign, and the covering of these States from the invasion of an enemy, so easy and practicable a business. I can assure those gentlemen, that it is a much easier and less distressing thing to draw remonstrances in a comfortable room by a good fireside, than to occupy a cold, bleak hill, and sleep under frost and snow, without clothes or blankets. However, although they seem to have little feeling for the naked and distressed soldiers, I feel superabundantly for them, and, from my soul, I pity those miseries, which it is neither in my power to relieve nor prevent."

After the immediate wants of the army in camp were provided for, he next employed his thoughts in devising a new and improved system for the future. The experience of three campaigns had proved the necessity of radical and extensive changes in the plans hitherto pursued, both in regard to the organization and discipline of the army, and to the methods of obtaining supplies. He deemed the subject to be of the utmost importance, and one upon the due adjustment of which would depend not only the efficiency, but even the existence, of

a Continental military force. That he might act upon the soundest principles, and with all the aids that could be collected from the knowledge and reflections of others, he requested the general officers to state their sentiments in writing. The result was a series of elaborate essays, containing such facts, discussions, and opinions, as the judgment and military skill of the writers enabled them to present.

Moved by the earnest solicitations of Washington, Congress at the same time took the subject into consideration. Their debates finally terminated in the appointment of a committee of five members of their body, who were instructed to repair to the camp at Valley Forge, and invested with ample powers to confer with the Commander, and digest in concert with him such a system as would correct existing abuses, lead to salutary reforms, and put the army on the footing he desired. When the committee arrived in camp, he laid before them a memoir, drawn up with great care, representing in detail the defects of previous arrangements, and containing an outline of a new and improved system. The committee continued in camp three months, and then returned to Congress and presented a report, which was in the main adopted.

On one point, however, which Washington considered not more equitable in itself, than essential to the continuance of an army, there was great difference of opinion among the members of Congress. Hitherto there had been no provision made for the officers after the war should end, and no other inducement offered to them than their common wages while in actual service. Numerous complaints and resignations convinced Washington, that this motive, even when strengthened by ambition and patriotism, was not enough. He proposed half-pay for life, after the close of the war, or some other permanent provision.

"If my opinion be asked," said he in a letter to Congress, "with respect to the necessity of making this provision for the officers, I am ready to declare, that I do most religiously believe the salvation of the cause depends upon it, and, without it, your officers will moulder to nothing, or be composed of low and illiterate men, void of capacity for this or any other business. To prove this, I can with truth aver, that scarce a day passes without the offer of two or three commissions; and my advices from the eastward and southward are, that numbers who had gone home on furlough mean not to return, but are establishing themselves in more lucrative employments.

Let Congress determine what will be the consequence of this spirit.

"Personally, as an officer, I have no interest in their decision, because I have declared, and I now repeat it, that I never will receive the smallest benefit from the half-pay establishment; but, as a man who fights under the weight of proscription, and as a citizen, who wishes to see the liberty of his country established upon a permanent foundation, and whose property depends upon the success of our arms, I am deeply interested. But, all this apart, and justice out of the question, upon the single ground of economy and public saving, I will maintain the utility of it; for I have not the least doubt, that, until officers consider their commissions in an honorable and interested point of view, and are afraid to endanger them by negligence and inattention, no order, regularity, or care, either of the men or public property, will prevail."

These representations, so judicious and forcible, could not fail to have some influence even on the minds of those, who were the most decided in their hostility to the measure. But they did not produce entire conviction, and the subject met with difficulties and delays. One party thought, or professed to think, that Congress had no power to act in such a

matter, and proposed to refer it to the State legislatures; another was haunted with the fear of a standing army, a privileged class, and a pension list; and another could see no difference between the sacrifices of the officers, in defending their country, and of private citizens, whose property was plundered, ravaged, and destroyed by the enemy. After much discussion, the plan of half-pay for life was carried, but by so small a majority that the vote was reconsidered, and a compromise was effected. By the ultimate decision, the officers were to receive half-pay for the term of seven years, and a gratuity of eighty dollars was to be given to each non-commissioned officer and soldier, who should continue in the service to the end of the war.

While this subject was under discussion, Washington saw with deep concern the jeal-ousy of the army, which was manifested in Congress, and its unhappy influence on their deliberations. In other countries this prejudice exists against standing armies only in times of peace, and this because the troops are a distinct body from the citizens, having few interests in common with them, and little other means of support than what flows from their military employment. But "it is our policy," said he, "to be prejudiced against

them in time of war, though they are citizens, having all the ties and interests of citizens, and in most cases property totally unconnected with the military line." So heavily did this subject weigh upon his mind, that he unburdened himself freely in a letter to a member of Congress, and used all his endeavors to promote harmony, union, and a national feeling among those on whom the safety of the republic depended, whether acting in a civil or military capacity.

"If we would pursue a right system of policy," he observed, "in my opinion, there should be none of these distinctions. We should all, Congress and army, be considered as one people, embarked in one cause, in one interest; acting on the same principle, and to the same end. The distinction, the jealousies set up, or perhaps only incautiously let out. can answer not a single good purpose. They are impolitic in the extreme. Among individuals the most certain way to make a man your enemy is to tell him you esteem him such. So with public bodies; and the very jealousy, which the narrow politics of some may affect to entertain of the army, in order to a due subordination to the supreme civil authority, is a likely means to produce a contrary effect; to incline it to the pursuit of those measures,

which they may wish it to avoid. It is unjust, because no order of men in the Thirteen States has paid a more sacred regard to the proceedings of Congress than the army; for without arrogance or the smallest deviation from truth it may be said, that no history now extant can furnish an instance of an army's suffering such uncommon hardships as ours has done, and bearing them with the same patience and fortitude. To see men, without clothes to cover their nakedness, without blankets to lie on, without shoes (for the want of which their marches might be traced by the blood from their feet), and almost as often without provisions as with them, marching through the frost and snow, and at Christmas taking up their winter quarters within a day's march of the enemy, without a house or hut to cover them till they could be built, and submitting without a murmur, is a proof of patience and obedience, which in my opinion can scarce be paralleled."

Bound by strong ties of attachment to the army, on the good or ill fortunes of which his own reputation so much depended, he spared no efforts to redress its grievances, maintain its rights, and mitigate its sufferings; but he was prompt and inflexible in checking the least disposition to encroach on the civil power, or

to claim privileges, however reasonable in themselves, which the peculiar circumstances of the country rendered it hazardous or inexpedient to grant. Considering the materials of the army, composed of freemen brought together and held together almost without the aid of law or of authority in any supreme head, unaccustomed to a soldier's life, impatient under discipline, and constantly exposed to extraordinary privations and distresses, it may truly be said, that no commander ever had a more difficult task to perform in discharging the duties of his station; and this in addition to the labor and responsibility of suggesting to Congress the important measures, which they were to adopt in regard to military affairs, the vexation of seeing his plans thwarted by prejudice and party dissensions, and the anxiety he never ceased to feel on account of the divided counsels, apathy, antipathies, and local predilections, which were manifested both in Congress and in the State legislatures.

About the middle of April arrived in New York a draft of what were called Lord North's Conciliatory Bills, containing a new project, by him submitted to Parliament, for settling the differences between Great Britain and the United States. This movement was prompt-

ed by the apprehension, that France would soon acknowledge the independence of the latter, and join in the war against England. Governor Tryon, to whom the draft of the bills was sent, had it immediately reprinted in New York, and took measures to disperse copies of it as extensively as possible in the country, which, he said, was done in obedience to "his Majesty's command." Copies were enclosed by him to General Washington, with a polite request that he would aid in circulating them, "that the people at large might be acquainted with the favorable disposition of Great Britain towards the American colonies." Washington sent them to Congress.

As to the tenor of the bills, it is enough to say, that the terms held out were such as would undoubtedly have been accepted in the first stages of the controversy. Important changes had since occurred. The Americans had declared themselves an independent nation. They had shed their blood, expended their means, and endured the miseries of a three years' war, in defence of the rights they claimed, and the character they had assumed. It was no part of the British ministry's plan to treat with the American States as an independent power. They were to go back to their old condition as colonies, be favored with

certain privileges, and, relieved from the burden of self-government, to trust their liberties again to the parental guardianship of the mother country. Till the remembrance of the past should be obliterated, these proffers were not likely to gain the confidence or change the sentiments of those, who had taken the lead in opposition after a thorough knowledge of the causes, and of the grounds on which they stood, and who had already risked much and labored hard to secure the political existence and prosperity of their country, by establishing them on the firm basis of union and freedom.

Yet it was feared there were some, who, weary of the war, or disheartened at the prospect of its continuance, might be soothed with the voice of conciliation, and thus become cold supporters of the popular cause, if not decided advocates for peace on the terms proposed. To prevent this consequence, as far as the weight of his judgment would go, Washington expressed his own opinions in very decided language to a member of Congress only two days after he learned the contents of the conciliatory bills. "Nothing short of independence, it appears to me, can possibly do. A peace on other terms would, if I may be allowed the expression, be a peace of war.

The injuries we have received from the British nation were so unprovoked, and have been so great and so many, that they can never be forgotten. Besides the feuds, the jealousies, the animosities, that would ever attend a union with them; besides the importance, the advantages, which we should derive from an unrestricted commerce; our fidelity as a people, our gratitude, our character as men, are opposed to a coalition with them as subjects, but in case of the last extremity. Were we easily to accede to terms of dependence, no nation, upon future occasions, let the oppressions of Britain be ever so flagrant and unjust, would interpose for our relief; or, at most, they would do it with a cautious reluctance, and upon conditions most probably that would be hard, if not dishonorable to us." Fortunately, the subject appeared in the same light to Congress. As soon as the drafts of Lord North's bills were received, they were referred to a committee; upon whose report a short discussion ensued; and it was unanimously resolved, that the terms offered were totally inadequate, and that no advances on the part of the British government for a peace would be met, unless, as a preliminary step, they either withdrew their armies and fleets, or acknowledged unequivocally the independence of the United States.

At the same time the bills were published in connexion with the proceedings of Congress, and circulated throughout the country.

The three commissioners, Lord Carlisle, Governor Johnstone, and William Eden, sent over from England to negotiate the business of conciliation, did not arrive in Philadelphia till six weeks after the drafts of the bills were published by Governor Tryon. Two of the commissioners, Johnstone and Eden, were the bearers of private letters of introduction to General Washington from his friends in England, and also of many other letters to gentlemen of high political standing. To all appearance the olive branch was fairly held out. The secretary to the commission was Dr. Ferguson, the celebrated professor of moral philosophy in Edinburgh. On the first landing of the commissioners, they despatched their letters to Washington's camp, and requested a passport for Dr. Ferguson to go to Yorktown, where Congress was then sitting, and present in person the papers they had brought. This matter being wholly of a civil nature, he did not think himself authorized to give such a passport, without the direction of Congress, and he forwarded to them the application. Impatient at the delay, or fearing a positive refusal from Congress to receive the papers, the

commissioners immediately sent them through the usual medium of a flag to the President. The reception they met with may be imagined from the manner in which Lord North's bills had been disposed of. The door to any kind of compromise on the principles laid down in those bills had been effectually closed, and Congress adhered to their first resolution. The commissioners remained several months in the country, made various attempts to gain their object, as well by art and address as by official intercourse, and at last went back to England baffled and disappointed, if indeed they ever had any real hope of success, which may be doubted.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Arrival of the French Treaties of Alliance and Commerce.—
Comparative Strength of the British and American Armies.—
Discussions respecting an Attack on Philadelphia.—Plans of
the Enemy.—Evacuation of Philadelphia.—The Army crosses
the Delaware.—Battle of Monmouth.—Arrest and Trial of
General Lee.

MEANTIME an important event occurred, which diffused universal joy in America. The King of France recognised the independence of the United States in a formal treaty of amity and commerce, and in a treaty of defensive alliance, both signed in Paris on the 6th of February, by M. Gérard on the part of France, and by the American commissioners, Franklin, Deane, and Lee. It was of course expected, that this procedure would bring on a war between England and France, and the parties mutually agreed not to lay down their arms till the independence of the United States should be assured by a treaty at the termination of the war. The messenger, who brought the news of this auspicious event, and who was likewise the bearer of the treaties. arrived in Yorktown on the 2d of May, ten days after Congress had passed their resolves respecting Lord North's bills. This last fact

is worthy of remark, as it shows that the transactions in France, being then unknown, had no influence in producing those resolves. The treaties were immediately ratified by Congress.

The army participated in the rejoicings everywhere manifested on this occasion. A day was set apart for a public celebration in camp. It began in the morning with religious services, and a discourse to each of the brigades by one of its chaplains. Then followed military parades, marchings, and firings of cannon and musketry, according to a plan announced in the general orders. The appearance was brilliant and the effect imposing. The whole ceremony was conducted with perfect regularity, and was closed with an entertainment, patriotic toasts, music, and other demonstrations of joy.

The British kept possession of Philadelphia through the winter and the spring following; and, although Washington's camp was within twenty miles of the city, yet no enterprise was undertaken to molest him in his quarters. Foraging parties went out and committed depredations upon the inhabitants; but they were watched by the Americans, who sometimes met them in fierce and bloody rencounters. When it was told to Dr. Franklin in Paris, that General Howe had taken Philadelphia, he

sagaciously replied; "Say rather, that Philadelphia has taken General Howe." This prediction, if such it may be called, was verified in the end. The conquest gained at the expense of a campaign, and with a considerable loss of men, actually availed nothing. Philadelphia, fortified on the land side and guarded by a formidable fleet in the river, afforded to the British army a resting-place for eight months. This was the whole fruit of the bloodshed and victory. New York would have afforded the same, without the trouble of a campaign, and at much less cost.

The number of troops for the Continental army, according to the new establishment agreed upon by the committee of Congress at Valley Forge, was to be about forty thousand besides artillery and horse. When a council of war was called, on the 8th of May, to consider what measures should be adopted for future operations, it was found, that the army, including the detachments on the North River and at other places, did not then exceed fifteen thousand men, nor was it supposed that it could soon be raised higher than twenty thousand effective men. The number at Valley Forge was eleven thousand eight hundred. The British army in New York and Philadelphia, as since ascertained from the adjutant's

returns, amounted to nearly thirty thousand, of which number nineteen thousand five hundred were in Philadelphia, and ten thousand four hundred in New York. There were besides three thousand seven hundred in Rhode Island; making the whole British army in the middle and eastern States upwards of thirty-three thousand.

These numbers are much larger than was imagined by the council of war. They estimated the enemy's force in Philadelphia at ten thousand, in New York at four thousand, and in Rhode Island at two thousand, besides cavalry and artillery. Upon this basis the question was discussed, whether it was expedient to take the field and act on the defensive, or wait till the plans of the enemy should become more obvious, and then be guided by circumstances. There was great unanimity in the decision. To take the city by storm was impracticable without a vastly superior force; and equally so to carry it by siege or blockade, strongly fortified as it was by nature and artificial works, and by vessels of war. Militia might be called out, but it was uncertain in what numbers; and, however numerous, they could not be depended on for such an enterprise. In every view of the subject, therefore, weighty objections presented themselves against any scheme of offensive operations.

It was not long before affairs began to put on a new aspect. From the intelligence communicated by spies, and from various indications, it was suspected, that the enemy were preparing to evacuate Philadelphia. Sir William Howe, weary of a service in which he found himself gradually losing the confidence of his employers and supplying his enemies with weapons to assail his reputation, and thinking his honors dearly bought at such a price, had asked to be recalled, and his request was granted by the King. He was succeeded, in the command of his Majesty's forces in America, by Sir Henry Clinton, who had been made knight of the order of the Bath during the past year. The treaties between France and the United States were regarded by the court of Great Britain as a declaration of war on the part of France, and caused a change in the plans of the ministry for conducting the contest in America. It was resolved to make a sudden descent upon some of the French possessions in the West Indies. To aid in executing this project, Sir Henry Clinton was ordered to send five thousand men from his army; and also three thousand more to Florida; and to withdraw the remainder to New

York. Another reason for this last movement was the probability, that a French fleet would soon appear at the mouth of the Delaware, and thus blockade the shipping in that river, and put in jeopardy the army, diminished as it would be by the departure of the above detachments.

Sir Henry Clinton first intended to proceed by water with his whole army to New York; but this was found impracticable for want of transports. He therefore shipped his cavalry, part of the German troops, the American loyalists, his provision train and heavy baggage, on board such vessels as were in the river, and prepared to march through New Jersey with the main body of his army.

While these preparations were making with as much secrecy as possible by the British commander, Washington sent out from Valley Forge a detachment of two thousand men under the Marquis de Lafayette, the object of which was to cover the country between the Delaware and Schuylkill, to interrupt the communication with Philadelphia, to obstruct the incursions of the enemy's parties, and gain intelligence of their motions and designs. Lafayette marched to Barren Hill, and, while stationed there, a large part of the British army came out by a forced march in the night, with

the intention of attacking him by surprise, and cutting off his detachment. Owing to the negligence, disobedience, or treachery of a picket guard, Lafayette was nearly surrounded by the enemy before he was informed of their approach; but, by a very skilful manœuvre, quickly conceived and performed in a masterly manner, he gained a ford and drew off his whole detachment across the Schuylkill, with the loss of only nine men killed and taken. The enemy retreated to Philadelphia.

To obstruct the progress of the British troops, in case they should take the route over land to New York, General Maxwell was ordered to cross the Delaware with a brigade, and to act in concert with General Dickinson, who commanded the New Jersey militia. It being more and more evident, that Sir Henry Clinton was preparing to move by land, the opinion of the general officers was required, as to the operations in consequence of that event. The principal point to be considered was, whether the army should pursue the British, fall upon their rear, and bring on an engagement. Opinions were various; but nearly all the officers were opposed to an attack, on account of the superiority of the enemy in force and discipline. General Lee, who had been exchanged, and had recently joined the army,

argued vehemently against such a step. Some of the officers agreed with him; others, who were unwilling to advise a general action, thought that the enemy should at any rate be harassed in their march, and that an engagement, though not to be sought, should not be avoided if circumstances rendered it expedient.

The news of the evacuation of Philadelphia, which took place in the morning of the 18th of June, was received while the subject was still under discussion. General Arnold, who had not yet entirely recovered from the wound he received at Saratoga, was ordered to march with a small detachment into the city, and to retain the command there. General Lee and General Wayne, each at the head of a division, took the road to Coryell's Ferry, with orders to halt on the first strong ground after passing the river. Washington followed, and in six days the whole army had crossed the Delaware, and arrived at Hopewell, five miles from Princeton. Detachments in the mean time had been sent to impede the enemy's march. Morgan's corps of six hundred men was ordered to gain their right flank, Maxwell's brigade to hang on their left, and General Scott, with fifteen hundred chosen troops, to gall their left flank and rear. To these were joined the New Jersey militia under General Dickinson, and a party of volunteers from Pennsylvania commanded by General Cadwalader.

After the British had crossed the river and landed at Gloucester Point, they marched by the way of Haddonfield and Mount Holly, and moved on slowly till they came to Crosswicks and Allen Town. Being encumbered with a long train of wagons and bat-horses, and confined to a single road, their line extended nearly twelve miles. It was necessary, also, to stop and build bridges over every stream and the marshy ground, as the bridges had all been destroyed by the Americans. These interruptions retarded their progress. Nor was it till he reached Allen Town, that Sir Henry Clinton decided what direction he should take from that place. It was his first purpose to proceed to the Rariton, and embark his troops at Brunswic or South Amboy for New York. But, finding Washington almost in his front, and deeming it imprudent to hazard a battle while his army was so much encumbered, and on such ground as his antagonist might choose, he turned to the right, and took the road leading to Monmouth and Sandy Hook.

At this time Washington's army had advanced to Kingston. In a council of war, convened at Hopewell, the question was again discussed, as to the mode of attacking the en-

emy. Sir Henry Clinton's force was supposed to consist of nine or ten thousand effective men. The Continental troops under Washington amounted to a little over twelve thousand: and there were about thirteen hundred militia. General Lee still persisted in the same sentiments as at first; and, as he was now next in rank to the Commander-in-chief, and an officer of long experience, his opinions and arguments had great weight in the council. He seemed averse to any kind of interference with the enemy; but he acceded to a proposal, in which he was joined by five others, that fifteen hundred men should be sent to hang on their rear. Six general officers, namely, Greene, Lafayette, Steuben, Wayne, Duportail, and Paterson, were for sending twenty-five hundred men, or at least two thousand, which should be followed by the main army at such a distance as to afford support, if it should be necessary. It was clearly the wish of these officers to draw the enemy into a general engagement, if it could be done under favorable circumstances. Indeed Greene, Lafayette, and Wayne declared their sentiments to this effect in writing.

Thus embarrassed with the divided opinions of his officers, Washington had a delicate part to act. There can be no doubt, however, that

his own judgment strongly inclined him to seek an engagement, from the time he left Valley Forge. The reputation of the army, and the expectation of the country, in his view required it; and he believed the chances of success at least sufficient to authorize the attempt. After the council at Hopewell, therefore, he asked no further advice, but proceeded on his individual responsibility. He immediately ordered a detachment of one thousand men under General Wayne to join the troops already near the enemy, and gave to General Lafayette the command of all the advanced parties, amounting now to about three thousand eight hundred men, including militia.

In his instructions to Lafayette he said; "You are to use the most effectual means for gaining the enemy's left flank, and giving every degree of annoyance. For these purposes you will attack them as occasion may require by detachment, and, if a proper opening should be given, by operating against them with your whole command." Foreseeing that these orders, executed with the spirit and ardor which characterized Lafayette, would soon lead to an action with a large part of the enemy's force, Washington prepared to sustain the advanced division, keeping within a distance proper for that purpose.

General Lee's seniority of rank entitled him to the command of all the advanced detachments; but, disapproving the plans of the Commander-in-chief and believing they would fail, he voluntarily yielded his claims to Lafavette. After this arrangement had been made with Washington's consent, and Lafayette had marched towards the enemy, Lee changed his mind and applied to be reinstated. As Lafavette could not with any degree of justice or propriety be recalled, Washington resorted to an expedient, which he hoped would preserve harmony, although it might not be entirely satisfactory to either of the parties. He put Lee at the head of two additional brigades, with orders to join the advanced detachments, when he would of course have the command of the whole; but directed him at the same time to give Lafavette notice of his approach, and to afford him all the assistance in his power for prosecuting any enterprise, which he might already have undertaken or planned. He wrote also to Lafayette, explaining the dilemma into which he was thrown by the vacillating conduct of General Lee, and expressing a conviction that he would cheerfully acquiesce in a measure, which the exigency of the occasion rendered necessary.

While the main army moved forward to Cranberry, and the advanced parties were hovering around the enemy's flanks and rear, Sir Henry Clinton changed the disposition of his line, placing the baggage train in front, and his best troops in the rear. With his army thus arranged, he encamped in a strong position near Monmouth Court-House, secured on nearly all sides by woods and marshy grounds. This was his situation on the morning of the 28th of June. Washington was at this time six or seven miles distant, and, receiving intelligence at five o'clock, that the enemy's front had begun to march, he instantly put the army in motion, and sent orders to General Lee by one of his aids to move on and commence the attack, "unless there should be very powerful reasons to the contrary," acquainting him at the same time, that he should come up as soon as possible to his support.

After marching about five miles, he was surprised and mortified to learn, that the whole of Lee's division, amounting to five thousand men, was by his orders retreating, without having made any opposition except one fire from a party, which had been charged by the enemy's cavalry. The situation was the more critical and alarming, as General Lee had given no notice of his retreat, but was marching

his troops into the face of the rear division, thus running the hazard of throwing all parts of the army into confusion at the moment when the enemy were pressing upon him with unimpeded force.*

Washington rode immediately to the rear of the retreating division, where he found General Lee, and, accosting him with a warmth in his language and manner, which showed his disappointment and displeasure, he ordered the troops to be formed and brought into action. Lee promptly obeyed, and with some difficulty the order of battle was restored in time to

^{*} Lee had manœuvred near the enemy for some time with the apparent intention of attacking them. While thus engaged, a party of British troops moved towards his right flank, and so placed itself that Lafayette thought a fair opportunity offered for cutting it off. He rode quickly up to Lee, and asked him if an attack could not be advantageously made in that quarter. "Sir," replied Lee, "you do not know British soldiers; we cannot stand against them; we shall certainly be driven back at first, and we must be cautious." Lafayette answered, that it might be so, but British soldiers had been beaten, and it was to be presumed they might be beaten again, and at any rate he was for making the trial. Soon afterwards one of Washington's aids arrived for intelligence, and, as he was returning, Lafayette desired him to say to the General, that his presence at the scene of action was extremely important. Before this message reached him, the retreat had begun.

check the advance of the enemy before the other division came up.

A disposition of the left wing and second line of the army was then made on an eminence, and partly in a wood, covered by a morass in front. This wing was commanded by Lord Stirling, who placed some batteries of cannon in such a manner as to play upon the enemy with great effect, and, aided by parties of infantry, to put a stop to their advance in that direction. General Greene commanded the right wing, and on the march he had been ordered to file off and take a road, which would bring him upon the enemy's flank. On hearing of the retreat he marched up and took a very advantageous position on the right. Being warmly opposed in front, the enemy attempted next to turn the American left flank, but were repulsed and driven back; and a similar movement to the right was equally unsuccessful, as they were bravely met by the troops with artillery under General Greene. In the mean time General Wayne advanced with a body of infantry, and kept up so hot and well-directed a fire upon the enemy's front, that they retired behind a marshy ravine to the ground which they had occupied at the beginning of the engagement.

In this situation both their flanks were se-

cured by woods and morasses, and they could be approached in front only through a narrow pass. Two bodies of troops were ordered to move round and gain their right and left, while the artillery should gall them in front. Before these movements could be effected, night came on and put an end to the action. Intending to renew the contest in the morning, Washington directed all the troops to lie upon their arms in the places where they happened to be stationed at dark. Wrapped in his cloak, he passed the night on the field of battle in the midst of his soldiers. But, when the morning dawned, no enemy was to be seen. Sir Henry Clinton had silently withdrawn his troops during the night, and followed his baggage train on the road leading to Middletown. As he would have gained commanding ground, where he might choose his own position, before he could be overtaken, and as the troops had suffered exceedingly from the intense heat of the weather and fatigue, it was not thought expedient to continue the pursuit.

This battle, though it can hardly be said to have resulted in a victory, was nevertheless honorable to the American arms, and, after the inauspicious retreat of the first division, was fought with skill and bravery. It was probably in all respects as successful as Washington

had hoped. Congress passed a unanimous vote of thanks to the Commander and the army.

Four British officers and two hundred and forty-five privates were left dead on the field, and were buried by the Americans. It appeared that others were likewise buried by the enemy, making the whole number of killed nearly three hundred. The American loss was sixty-nine killed. Several soldiers on both sides are said to have died in consequence of the extreme heat of the day, and it is probable that the number of Americans reported as killed does not include all that died from this cause.

But the loss of Sir Henry Clinton in battle made but a small part of the diminution of his army while marching through Jersey. One hundred were taken prisoners, and more than six hundred deserters arrived in Philadelphia within three weeks from the time he left it, being drawn thither chiefly by the attachments they had formed during eight months' residence in the city. Others also escaped into the country while on the march; so that the army, when it reached New York, had suffered a reduction of at least twelve hundred men.

After the action, Sir Henry Clinton proceeded to Sandy Hook, where Lord Howe's fleet, having come round from the Delaware, was in

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readiness to convey the troops to New York. Washington marched to Hudson's River, crossed at King's Ferry, and encamped near White Plains.

The pride of General Lee was wounded by the language, which Washington used when he met him retreating. The day after the action. Lee wrote a letter to Washington, containing expressions, which no officer could with propriety address to his superior. This was answered in a tone, that rather tended to increase than soothe his irritation, and he replied in terms still more offensive. In a subsequent note, written the same day, he requested that his case might be referred to a courtmartial. He was accordingly put in arrest, under three charges; first, disobedience of orders in not attacking the enemy, agreeably to repeated instructions; secondly, misbehavior before the enemy, in making an unnecessary, disorderly, and shameful retreat; thirdly, disrespect to the Commander-in-chief in two letters written after the action. A court-martial was summoned, which sat from time to time for three weeks while the army was on its march; and finally declared their opinion, that General Lee was guilty of all the charges, and sentenced him to be suspended from all command in the army of the United States for the

term of twelve months. In the written opinion of the court, the second charge was modified by omitting the word "shameful"; but in all other respects the charges were allowed to be sustained by the testimony. Congress approved the sentence. General Lee left the army, and never joined it again. He died four years afterwards in Philadelphia. *

^{*} Soon after General Lee rejoined the army at Valley Forge, a curious incident occurred. By an order of Congress, General Washington was required to administer the oath of allegiance to the general officers. The major-generals stood around Washington, and took hold of a Bible together according to the usual custom; but, just as he began to administer the oath, Lee deliberately withdrew his hand twice. This movement was so singular, and was performed in so odd a manner, that the officers smiled, and Washington inquired the meaning of his hesitancy. Lee replied, "As to King George, I am ready enough to absolve myself from all allegiance to him, but I have some scruples about the Prince of Wales." The strangeness of this reply was such, that the officers burst into a broad laugh, and even Washington could not refrain from a smile. The ceremony was of course interrupted. It was renewed as soon as a composure was restored proper for the solemnity of the occasion, and Lee took the oath with the other officers. Connected with the subsequent conduct of General Lee, this incident was thought by some, who were acquainted with it, to have a deeper meaning than at first appeared, and to indicate a less ardent and fixed patriotism towards the United States, than was consistent with the rank and professions of the second officer in the command of the American forces

CHAPTER XXIV.

Arrival of the French Fleet under Count d'Estaing. — Plans for combined Operations between the Fleet and the American Army. — Failure of an Attempt against the Enemy at Rhode Island. — Cantonments of the Army for the Winter. — Exchange of Prisoners. — Congress. — Project of an Expedition to Canada.

Before the army crossed the Hudson, General Washington heard of the arrival of Count d'Estaing on the coast with a French fleet, consisting of twelve ships of the line and four frigates. The admiral touched at the Capes of the Delaware, where he was informed of the evacuation of Philadelphia, and, after despatching up the river one of his frigates, on board of which was M. Gérard, the first minister from France to the United States, he sailed for Sandy Hook. No time was lost by General Washington in sending him a letter of congratulation, and proposing to coöperate with him in carrying any plans into execution, which might be concerted for attacking the enemy. Colonel Laurens, one of his aids-decamp, was the bearer of this letter, to whom the Count was referred for such information as he might wish to obtain. When it was known that the fleet had arrived at the Hook, Colonel

Hamilton, another confidential aid, was sent on board accompanied by four skilful pilots, and instructed to explain the General's views fully to Count d'Estaing.

If it should be found practicable for the French vessels to pass the bar, and engage the British fleet then at anchor within the Hook, it was supposed a simultaneous attack on the land side might be made to advantage; and indeed not without a prospect of very fortunate results, if the French should be able by a naval victory to enter the harbor and ascend to the city. These hopes were soon dissipated by the unanimous opinion of the pilots, that there was not sufficient depth of water to admit Count d'Estaing's heavy ships over the bar, and by their refusal to take the responsibility of attempting to conduct them through the channel.

The only enterprise, that now remained, was an attack on the enemy at Rhode Island, where six thousand British troops were stationed, chiefly in garrison at Newport, and protected by a few small vessels, batteries, and strong intrenchments. The French squadron departed for that place, without being molested by Lord Howe, whose force was not such as to encourage him to go out and give battle. Anticipating the French admiral's determina-

tion, Washington prepared to lend all the aid in his power to make it effectual. General Sullivan was already in Providence, at the head of a considerable body of Continental troops; and he was ordered to apply to the States of Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and Connecticut, for militia enough to augment his force to at least five thousand men. A detachment of two brigades marched from the main army under Lafayette, who was followed by General Greene. The events of this expedition do not fall within the limits of the present narrative. Various causes contributed to its failure, by defeating the combined action of the land and naval forces. Count d'Estaing's fleet, after leaving Newport, was so much crippled by a tremendous storm, and a partial engagement at sea, that he put in to the harbor of Boston to refit, where he remained till November.

The disagreements, which unhappily existed between the American and French officers at Rhode Island, gave the deepest concern to Washington. In a letter to Lafayette, who had communicated the particulars, he lamented it as a misfortune, which might end in a serious injury to the public interest; and he endeavored to assuage the rising animosity of

the parties by counsels equally creditable to his feelings as a man and to his patriotism.

To Count d'Estaing he wrote in language not less delicate and conciliatory, nor less fitted to remove unfavorable impressions.

In compliance with the order from the ministry given early in the season, Sir Henry Clinton detached five thousand men to the West Indies and three thousand to Florida: but there was much delay in fitting out these expeditions, and the troops did not actually sail till near the end of October. Lord Howe's fleet in the mean time had been reinforced by a squadron from Europe. As neither the orders nor the plans of the British general were known, it was conjectured that he might have in view a stroke upon Count d'Estaing's fleet in Boston harbor, and perhaps an attack upon that town. It is probable, also, that General Clinton gave a currency to rumors of this sort, for the purpose of diverting the attention of the Americans from his real objects. A report gained credit, believed to have come from good authority, that New York was to be evacuated. Washington suspected the true origin of this rumor, and could not persuade himself that an eastern expedition was intended; yet the public impression and the conviction of some of his officers were so strong, as

to its reality, that he took measures to guard against it.

He established his head-quarters at Fredericksburg, thirty miles from West Point, near the borders of Connecticut, and sent forward a division under General Gates to Danbury. The roads were repaired as far as Hartford, to facilitate the march of the troops, and three brigades were despatched to that place. General Gates went to Boston, and took command of the eastern department, as successor to General Heath. These operations kept the army employed on the east side of the Hudson more than four months, till it was finally ascertained that the enemy had no designs in that direction.

Sir Henry Clinton took care to profit by this diversion of the American army. Foraging parties passed over to New Jersey, and ravaged the country. One of these parties attacked Baylor's dragoons in the night, at a short distance from Tappan, rushing upon them with the bayonet, and committing indiscriminate slaughter. A similar assault was made upon Pulaski's legion at Egg Harbor. Both these adventures were attended with such acts of cruelty on the part of the enemy, as are seldom practised in civilized warfare. And they were not less impolitic than cruel,

being regarded with universal indignation and horror by the people, and exciting a spirit of hatred and revenge, which would necessarily react in one form or another upon their foes. In fact this point of policy was strangely misunderstood by the British, or more strangely perverted, at every stage of the contest. They had many friends in the country, whom it was their interest to retain, and they professed a desire to conciliate others; yet they burned and destroyed towns, villages, and detached farm-houses, plundered the inhabitants without distinction, and brought down the savages with the tomahawk and scalping-knife upon the defenceless frontier settlements, marking their course in every direction with murder, desolation, and ruin. The ministry approved and encouraged these atrocities, flattering themselves that the people would sink under their sufferings, bewail their unhappy condition, become tired of the war, and compel their leaders to seek an accommodation. The effect was directly the contrary in every instance. The people knew their rights, and had the common feelings of humanity; and, when the former were wantonly invaded and the latter outraged, it was natural that their passions should be inflamed, and that they who were at first pacifically inclined should be roused to

resistance and retaliation. If the British cabinet had aimed to defeat its own objects, and to consolidate the American people into a united phalanx of opposition, it could not have chosen or pursued more effectual methods.

The campaign being closed, General Washington prepared to put the army into winter quarters. Nine brigades were stationed on the west side of Hudson's River, exclusive of the garrison at West Point. One of these was near Smith's Clove, where it could serve as a reinforcement to West Point, should this be necessary; one at Elizabethtown; and the other seven at Middlebrook, which place was likewise selected for head-quarters. Six brigades were cantoned on the east side of the Hudson and at West Point as follows; one at West Point, two at the Continental Village, a post between Fishkill and West Point, and three in the vicinity of Danbury in Connecticut. The artillery was at Pluckemin. A line of cantonments was thus formed around New York from Long Island Sound to the Delaware, so disposed as to afford security to the country, and to reinforce each other in case of an excursion of the enemy to any particular point. The other important objects intended by this disposition were the comfort, discipline, and easy subsistence of the troops. General

Putnam commanded at Danbury, and General McDougall in the Highlands. In the expectation that the British detachments, which sailed from New York, might act in the winter against South Carolina and Georgia, General Lincoln was sent by order of Congress to take the command of the southern department.

The four regiments of cavalry were widely separated; one being at Winchester in Virginia, another at Frederic in Maryland, a third at Lancaster in Pennsylvania, and a fourth at Durham in Connecticut. These cantonments were chosen apparently with a view to the convenience of procuring forage.

The exchange of prisoners continued to be a troublesome and perplexing subject. Arrangements had been made with Sir William Howe, before he left Philadelphia, by which exchanges to a certain extent had been effected. But new difficulties arose in regard to what were called the Convention Troops. Although Congress had ratified the convention of Saratoga, yet for various reasons they did not permit Burgoyne's army to embark for Europe according to the terms of that convention. Washington had no concern with this affair, except to execute the orders of Congress. These troops being thus retained in the country, it was finally agreed, on the part of the

British commander, that they should be exchanged for American prisoners in his hands. But the conditions prescribed by Congress were such, that it was a long time before the object was attained. They proposed that officers of equal rank should first be exchanged; next, superior officers for an equivalent number of inferior; and if, after all the officers of the enemy should be exchanged, there should still be a surplus of American officers among the prisoners, they were to be exchanged for an equivalent number of privates of the convention troops.

This principle was objected to by Sir Henry Clinton on two grounds; first, it separated the officers from the corps to which they were attached; and, secondly, it gave an advantage to the Americans, inasmuch as their officers could go immediately into active service, whereas the British officers must remain idle till the privates constituting the corps to which they belonged should be released. Congress did not choose to relax from their resolves, and the business of exchange was a perpetual source of vexation. In short, the interests of the two parties were so much at variance, that it was not easy to reconcile them. The difficulty of procuring soldiers in Europe, and the great expense of bringing them over and

maintaining them, rendered every man of vastly more importance to the British army, than in the American ranks, which could be filled up with militia when the occasion required. Hence the British general was always extremely solicitous to procure the exchange of his private soldiers, and Congress equally averse to gratifying him in this point. There was another reason, which operated with considerable weight on both sides. The British prisoners were mostly German troops, who had no affection for the cause in which they were engaged, and who, while in the country under a loose system of military discipline, had many facilities and temptations to desert.

There was another cause of anxiety in the breast of Washington, which began now to be felt more seriously than at any former period of the war. The men of talents and influence, who had taken the lead and combined their strength in raising the standard of independence, had gradually withdrawn from Congress, till that body was left small in number, and comparatively feeble in counsels and resource. For the year past, the number of delegates present had seldom averaged over thirty, and sometimes it was under twenty-five. Whole States were frequently unrepresented; and indeed it was seldom, that every State was

so fully represented as to entitle it to a vote. And at no time were private jealousies and party feuds more rife or mischievous in their effects. These symptoms were alarming to every true friend of his country, who reflected on their tendency, and they filled the mind of Washington with deep concern. To those, in whom he had confidence, he laid open his fears, and endeavored to awaken a sense of the public danger.

The conquest of Canada was always a favorite project with Congress; and at this time, when the British forces were divided by being employed against the French in the West Indies, it was thought that a good opportunity offered itself for turning the arms of the United States against that province. After the termination of the affair at Long Island, the Marquis de Lafayette went to Philadelphia, and obtained a furlough from Congress, with the intention of returning to France on a short In concert with him a plan was formed of an attack on Canada, which was to be the principal object of the ensuing campaign, and the basis of which was a coöperation with a French fleet and army. Lafayette was to have full instructions for arranging the matter with the court of Versailles, aided by the counsel

and support of Dr. Franklin, then the American plenipotentiary in France.

The plan was on a very large scale. Attacks were to be made by the American army at three points far distant from each other, namely, Detroit, Niagara, and by way of the Connecticut River; while a French fleet should ascend the St. Lawrence, with four or five thousand troops, and act against Quebec. The scheme was discussed, matured, and approved with much unanimity in Congress, and then sent to Washington with the request that he would communicate his sentiments. He replied in a long despatch, entering minutely into the subject, and showing that the plan was impracticable; that it required resources in troops and money, which were not to be had; that it would involve Congress in engagements to their ally, which it would be impossible to fulfil; and that it was in itself so extensive and complicated, as to hold out no reasonable hope of success, even with all the requisite means of pursuing it.

- Such was his opinion in a military view. But the subject presented itself to him in another aspect, in which he thought it deserved special consideration. Canada formerly belonged to France, and had been severed from her in a manner, which, if not humiliating to

her pride, contributed nothing to her glory. Would she not be eager to recover this lost province? If it should be conquered with her aid, would she not claim it at the peace as rightfully belonging to her, and be able to advance plausible reasons for such a demand? Would not the acquisition itself hold out a strong temptation? The territory abounded in supplies for the use of her Islands, it opened a wide field of commerce with the Indian nations, it would give her the command of posts on this continent independent of the precarious good will of an ally, it would put her in a condition to engross the whole trade of Newfoundland, and above all, it would afford her facilities for awing and controlling the United States, "the natural and most formidable rival of every maritime power in Europe." He added, "France, acknowledged for some time past the most powerful monarchy in Europe by land, able now to dispute the empire of the sea with Great Britain, and, if joined with Spain, I may say, certainly superior, possessed of New Orleans on our right, Canada on our left, and seconded by the numerous tribes of Indians in our rear from one extremity to the other, a people so generally friendly to her, and whom she knows so well how to conciliate, would, it is much to be apprehended,

have it in her power to give law to tnese States."

These sentiments, he said, did not grow out of any distrust of the good faith of France in the alliance she had formed. On the contrary, he was willing to entertain and cherish the most favorable impressions, in regard to her motives and aims. "But," he added again, "it is a maxim founded on the universal experience of mankind, that no nation is to be trusted further than it is bound by its interest; and no prudent statesman or politician will venture to depart from it. In our circumstances we ought to be particularly cautious; for we have not yet attained sufficient vigor and maturity to recover from the shock of any false step, into which we may unwarily fall. If France should even engage in the scheme, in the first instance, with the purest intentions, there is the greatest danger, that, in the progress of the business, invited to it by circumstances, and perhaps urged on by the solicitations and wishes of the Canadians, she would alter her views." In short, allowing all his apprehensions to be unfounded, he was still reluctant to multiply national obligations, or to give to any foreign power claims of merit for services performed beyond what was absolutely indispensable.

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The observations and reasonings of the Commander-in-chief were so far operative on Congress, as to induce them at once to narrow their scheme, though not entirely to give it up. They participated in the general opinion, that the war with France would necessarily employ the British fleet and troops in other parts of the world, and that they would soon evacuate the towns on the seacoast of the United States. In this event, they thought an expedition against Canada should still be the object of the campaign, and that preparations should accordingly be made. They requested General Washington to write to Dr. Franklin, and to the Marquis de Lafayette, who was then at Boston, ready to depart for Europe, and state to them such details as might be laid before the French court, in order that eventual measures might be taken for cooperation in case an armament should be sent to Quebec from France. The plan in this shape, however, was not more satisfactory to him, than in its original form. saw no reason for supposing the British would evacuate the States, and he believed a system of operations built upon that basis would fail. At any rate he was not prepared to hazard the responsibility of drawing the French government into a measure so full of uncertainty, and depending on so many contingencies.

The army being now in winter quarters, and his presence with it not being essential, he suggested the expediency of a personal interview with the members of Congress, in which his sentiments could be more fully explained than by writing. This proposition was approved. He arrived in Philadelphia on the 24th of December, and, after several discussions between him and a committee of Congress, the Canada scheme was wholly laid aside.

It is a remarkable fact, as connected with the above suspicions on political grounds, that the French government was decidedly opposed to an expedition against Canada. The French minister in the United States was instructed, before he left France, not to favor any projects of conquest; and it was the policy of the court of Versailles, that Canada and Nova Scotia should remain in the power of Great Britain. The reasons for this policy may not be obvious; but the fact is unquestionable. It is to be considered, however, that France had by treaty pledged herself to carry on the war, till the independence of the United States should be secured; but she had not engaged to fight for conquests, nor for the extension of the territories of the United States beyond their original limits. Such an engagement

would have bound her to continue the war indefinitely, with no other object than to gratify the ambition or enmity of her ally, while every motive of interest and of national honor might prompt her to seek for peace. It was evident, too, that the pride of England, humbled by conceding the independence of her revolted colonies, would never brook the severance of her other provinces by the direct agency of France. All conquests thus made, therefore, would perplex the negotiations for peace, and might involve France in a protracted war, without the least prospect of advantage to herself. Hence she resolved to adhere strictly to her pledge in the treaty of alliance. But, although the French minister in America was instructed not to hold out encouragement of coöperation in plans of conquest, yet he was at the same time directed not to throw any obstacles in the way; thus leaving the United States to decide and act for themselves. Should they gain conquests by their own strength, these might reasonably be claimed by them in a treaty of peace, without embarrassing the relations between France and England.

CHAPTER XXV.

Conferences with a Committee of Congress, and Plans for the next Campaign. — Sullivan's Expedition against the Indians. — The Enemy commence a predatory Warfare. — The Burning of New Haven, Fairfield, and Norwalk. — Stony Point stormed and taken. — Successful Enterprise against Paulus Hook. — Washington's Interviews with the French Minister. — Plans proposed for cooperating with Count d'Estaing. — The Army goes into Winter Quarters. — Depreciation of the Currency, and its Effects.

GENERAL WASHINGTON remained in Philadelphia about five weeks, holding conferences with a committee of Congress, and making arrangements for the campaign of 1779. He suggested three plans, with remarks on the mode of executing them, and the probable result of each. The first plan had in view an attempt to drive the enemy from their posts on the seacoast; the second, an attack on Niagara, and an offensive position in that quarter; and, by the third, it was proposed to hold the army entirely on the defensive, except such operations as would be necessary to chastise the Indians, who had committed depredations on the frontiers during the past year, and who, emboldened by success, might be expected to repeat their ravages.

After mature deliberation, and taking into

the account the exhausted state of the country in regard both to pecuniary resources and supplies for an army, it was decided to adopt the third plan as the best suited to circumstances, the least expensive, and perhaps the most beneficial in its ultimate effects. It would afford an opportunity to retrench the heavy charges of the war, and to pursue a system of economy imperiously demanded by the financial embarrassments in which Congress had become involved, and thus enable them to do something for the relief of public credit, and for restoring the value of the currency, which was fast sinking into disrepute, unsettling prices, and threatening ruin to almost every branch of industry. It would also give repose to the country, and, by leaving a larger number of laborers to cultivate the soil, contribute to increase the supplies so much wanted for the comfort of the people, as well as for the subsistence of the army.

Having completed all the necessary arrangements with Congress, he returned to head-quarters at Middlebrook. The infantry of the Continental army was organized for the campaign in eighty-eight battalions, apportioned to the several States, according to the ratio hitherto assumed. There were four regiments of cavalry and forty-nine companies of artillery.

The objects of the campaign not requiring so large a number of men in the field as on former occasions, it was intended to bestow the more attention upon their discipline and practical skill. Baron Steuben, trained in the wars and under the eye of Frederic the Great, had been appointed inspector-general of the army the year before. He wrote a system of tactics, which was published, adopted, and put in practice. His services were of great importance, both as an experienced officer, and as a successful teacher of his system, by which the discipline of the army was much improved, and the discordant exercises and evolutions of the troops from different States were reduced to method and uniformity.

The winter and the spring passed away without the occurrence of any remarkable event. The British remained within their lines at New York, showing no disposition for hazardous adventures, and apparently making no preparation for any important expedition into the country.

General Washington in the mean time turned his thoughts to the fitting out of an expedition against the Indians. The confederated Indians of the Six Nations, except the Oneidas and a few of the Mohawks, influenced by Sir John Johnson and British agents from Canada,

became hostile to the United States, although at first they pretended to a sort of neutrality. Joined by a band of Tories, and persons of abandoned principles collected from various parts, they fell upon the frontier settlements, and waged the most cruel and destructive war against the defenceless and unoffending inhabitants. The massacres at Cherry Valley and Wyoming had filled every breast with horror, and humanity cried aloud for vengeance on the perpetrators of such deeds of atrocity. To break up these hordes of banditti, or at all events to drive them back and lay waste their territories, was the object of the expedition.

Four thousand Continental troops were detached for the purpose, who were joined by militia from the State of New York and independent companies from Pennsylvania. The command of the whole was given to General Sullivan. Three thousand men rendezvoused at Wyoming, where General Sullivan first established his head-quarters, and from which place he proceeded up the Susquehanna River into the Indian country. At the same time General James Clinton advanced with another division from the Mohawk River, by way of Otsego Lake and the east branch of the Susquehanna, and formed a junction with Sullivan near the fork, where the two main branches of

the river unite. The army, then amounting to about five thousand men, including militia, marched into the wilderness towards the Indian settlements. It was met and opposed by a body of Tories and Indians, who were soon routed and driven back. There was no other encounter, except slight skirmishes with small parties. Sullivan pursued a circuitous route as far as the Genessee River, destroying all the villages, houses, corn, and provisions, which ell in his way. Every habitation was deserted, the Indians having retired with their families to the neighborhood of Niagara, where they were protected and supplied by a British garison. The purpose of the expedition being attained, the army retraced its steps down the Susuehanna, to Wyoming, and arrived there after an absence of a little more than two monhs.

Si Henry Clinton early in the spring sent a detachment of two thousand five hundred men to Viginia, commanded by General Matthews. They landed at Portsmouth, sacked the town, marched to Suffolk, destroyed a magazine of provisions in that place, burnt the village and several detached private houses, and seized large quantities of tobacco. Many vessels were likewise captured, others were burnt and sunk, and much plunder was taken. With

this pooty they returned to New York. The enterprise was executed in conformity with orders from the ministry, who, after the ill success of their commissioners, had adopted the policy of a predatory warfare on the seacoast, with the design of destroying the towns, ships, and magazines, conceiving, as expressed by Lord George Germain, "that a war of this sort, carried on with spirit and humanity, would probably induce the rebellious provinces to return to their allegiance, or at least prevert their sending out that swarm of privateers, the success of which had encouraged them to persevere in their revolt."

When the squadron returned from Virginia, it was immediately joined by other vessels having on board a large body of troops all of which sailed up Hudson's River. This expedition was conducted by Sir Henry Clinton in person, and his first object was to take the posts at Stony Point and Verplanck's Point, situate on opposite sides of the Hudson, where the Americans had thrown up works to protect King's Ferry, the main chainel of communication between the eastern and middle States. Should circumstances favor so bold an experiment, he intended next to endeavor to force his way into the Lighlands, make himself master of the fortifications and

strong passes, and thus secure the command of the Hudson.

Being informed of the preparations in New York, and penetrating the designs of the British commander, Washington was at hand in time to prevent the execution of the second part of the scheme. By rapid marches he drew his troops from their cantonments in New Jersey, and placed them in such positions as to discourage Sir Henry Clinton from attempting any thing further, than the capture of the two posts above mentioned, which were in no condition to resist a formidable fleet and an army of more than six thousand men. After this event, which happened on the 1st of June, Clinton withdrew his forces down the river, and at length to New York, leaving a strong garrison at each of the posts, with orders to extend and complete the works begun by the Americans; and also directing such a number of armed vessels and boats to remain there, as would be necessary to furnish supplies and contribute to their defence.

General Washington removed his headquarters to New Windsor, a few miles above West Point, distributing his army chiefly in and near the Highlands, but stationing a force on each side of the river below, sufficient to check any sudden incursion of the enemy.

The system of devastation and plunder was vigorously pursued. About the beginning of July a detachment of two thousand six hundred men, under Governor Tryon, sailed from New York into Long Island Sound. They first landed at New Haven, plundered the inhabitants indiscriminately, and burnt the stores on the wharfs. This being done, they embarked, and landed at Fairfield and Norwalk, which towns were reduced to ashes. Dwelling-houses, shops, churches, school-houses, and the shipping in the harbors, were destroyed. The soldiers pillaged without restraint, committing acts of violence, and exhibiting the horrors of war in some of their most revolting forms. It does not appear that there were troops, magazines, or public property in either of the towns. The waste and distress fell on individuals, who were pursuing the ordinary occupations of life. The people rallied in self-defence, and a few were killed; but the enemy retired to their vessels before the militia could assemble in large numbers.

The British commander hoped that this invasion of Connecticut would draw away the American army from the Highlands to a position where he might bring on an engagement under favorable circumstances. Washington's habitual caution guarded him against allowing

such an advantage. On the contrary, while the enemy's forces were thus divided, he resolved to attack the strong post at Stony Point. "The necessity of doing something to satisfy the expectations of the people and reconcile them to the defensive plan, which he was obliged to pursue, the value of the acquisition in itself, with respect to the men, artillery, and stores, which composed the garrison, the effect it would have upon the successive operations of the campaign, and the check it would give to the depredations of the enemy," were, as he said, the motives which prompted him to this undertaking. He reconnoitred the post himself, and instructed Major Henry Lee, who was stationed near it with a party of cavalry, to gain all the information in his power as to the condition of the works and the strength of the garrison.

The enterprise was intrusted to General Wayne, who commanded a body of light infantry in advance of the main army, where he was placed to watch the movements of the enemy, to prevent their landing, and to attack separate parties whenever opportunities should offer. Having procured all the requisite information, and determined to make the assault, Washington communicated general instructions to Wayne in writing and conversation, leaving

the rest to the well tried bravery and skill of that gallant officer.

The night of the 15th of July was fixed on for the attack. After a march of fourteen miles during the afternoon, the party arrived within a mile and a half of the enemy at eight o'clock in the evening. The works were then reconnoitred by the commander and the principal officers, and at half past eleven the whole moved forward in two columns to the assault. The van of the right column consisted of one hundred and fifty volunteers with unloaded muskets and fixed bayonets, preceded by twenty picked men to remove the abatis and other obstructions. One hundred volunteers, preceded likewise by twenty men, composed the van of the left. Positive orders were given not to fire, but to rely wholly on the bayonet, which orders were faithfully obeyed. A deep morass in front of the enemy's works, and a double row of abatis, retarded their progress; but these obstacles were soon overcome by the ardor of the troops, and the assault began about twenty minutes after twelve. From that time they pushed forward in the face of a tremendous fire of musketry and of cannon loaded with grapeshot, and both columns met in the centre of the enemy's works, each arriving nearly at the same instant. General Wayne, who advanced with the right column, received a slight wound in the head, and was supported into the works by his aids-de-camp.

The assault was successful in all its parts. The number of prisoners was five hundred and forty-three, and the number killed on the side of the enemy was sixty-three. Of the assailing party fifteen were killed, and eightythree wounded. Several cannons and mortars of various sizes, a large number of muskets. shells, shot, and tents, and a proportional quantity of stores, were taken. The action is allowed to have been one of the most brilliant of the Revolution. Congress passed resolves complimentary to the officers and privates, granting specific rewards, and directing the value of all the military stores taken in the garrison to be divided among the troops in proportion to the pay of the officers and men. Three different medals were ordered to be struck, emblematical of the action, and awarded respectively to General Wayne, Colonel Fleury, and Colonel Stewart. Congress also passed a vote of thanks to General Washington "for the vigilance, wisdom, and magnanimity, with which he had conducted the military operations of the States," and especially as manifested in his orders for the late attack.

It was his first intention, if the storming of Stony Point should prove successful, to make an immediate attempt against Verplanck's Point, on the opposite side of the river. For this purpose he had requested General Wayne to forward the intelligence to head-quarters through the hands of General McDougall, who commanded at West Point, and who would be in readiness to send down a detachment by the way of Peekskill to attack Verplanck's Point on the land side, while it was cannonaded from Stony Point across the river. By some misunderstanding, the messenger neglected to call at West Point, and thus several hours were lost before General McDougall received the intelligence. To this delay has been ascribed the failure of the undertaking against Verplanck's Point. From the letters of General McDougall and other officers written at the time, however, it is evident that the want of horses and conveniences for the transportation of artillery was such, as to render it impossible in any event to arrive at Verplanck's Point with the adequate means of assault, before the enemy had assembled a sufficient force to give entire security to the garrison.

When Washington examined Stony Point after the capture, he resolved to evacuate the post, remove the cannon and stores, and de-

stroy the works. Being accessible by the enemy's vessels of war, a larger number of men would be required for the defence than could properly be spared from the main army; and at the same time it might be necessary to hazard a general action, which was by no means to be desired on such terms as would be imposed, and for such an object. Every thing was brought off, except one heavy cannon. The enemy afterwards reoccupied the post, and repaired the works.

About a month after the storming of Stony Point, another enterprise similar in its character, and not less daring, was executed by Major Henry Lee. At the head of three hundred men, and a troop of dismounted dragoons, he surprised the enemy's post at Paulus Hook, opposite to New York, and took one hundred and fifty-nine prisoners, having two only of his party killed and three wounded. The plan originated with Major Lee, and great praise was bestowed upon him for the address and bravery with which it was executed. A medal of gold, commemorative of the event, was ordered by Congress to be struck and presented to him.

No other events of much importance happened in the army under Washington's immediate command during the campaign. The British troops remained inactive at New York, and the Americans held their ground in the Highlands. In the course of this year the works at West Point and in its vicinity were chiefly constructed. A part of the time two thousand five hundred men were on fatigue duty every day. Before the end of July the head-quarters of the Commander-in-chief were removed to West Point, where he continued for the rest of the season.

As few incidents of a personal nature intervene to vary the monotony of military operations, and of the great public affairs which occupied the thoughts of Washington, it may not be amiss to insert here a letter inviting a friend to dine with him at head-quarters. It gives an idea of the manner in which he lived, and shows that he could sometimes be playful, even when oppressed with public cares, and in the midst of the harassing duties of his command. The letter is addressed to Dr. Cochran, surgeon-general in the army, and dated at West Point on the 16th of August.

"Dear Doctor,

"I have asked Mrs. Cochran and Mrs. Livingston to dine with me to-morrow; but am I not in honor bound to apprize them of their fare? As I hate deception, even where the imagination only is concerned, I will. It is

needless to premise, that my table is large enough to hold the ladies. Of this they had ocular proof yesterday. To say how it is usually covered, is rather more essential; and this shall be the purport of my letter:

"Since our arrival at this happy spot, we have had a ham, sometimes a shoulder of bacon, to grace the head of the table; a piece of roast beef adorns the foot; and a dish of beans, or greens, almost imperceptible, decorates the centre. When the cook has a mind to cut a figure, which I presume will be the case tomorrow, we have two beefsteak pies, or dishes of crabs, in addition, one on each side of the centre dish, dividing the space and reducing the distance between dish and dish to about six feet, which without them would be nearly twelve feet apart. Of late he has had the surprising sagacity to discover, that apples will make pies; and it is a question, if, in the violence of his efforts, we do not get one of apples, instead of having both of beefsteaks. If the ladies can put up with such entertainment, and will submit to partake of it on plates, once tin but now iron (not become so by the labor of scouring), I shall be happy to see them; and am, dear Doctor, yours."

Sir Henry Clinton, disappointed in not receiving additions to his army from Europe,

began to be weary of his situation, and to despair of effecting any thing that would either redound to the glory of the British arms, or answer the expectations of his employers. On the 21st of August he said, in a letter to Lord George Germain, "I now find myself obliged by many cogent reasons to abandon every view of making an effort in this quarter. The precautions, which General Washington has had leisure to take, make me hopeless of bringing him to a general action, and the season dissuades me strongly from losing time in the attempt." He informs the minister, that his thoughts are turned to the south, that he shall put New York in a complete state of defence, withdraw his troops from the posts on the Hudson, and sail for South Carolina with a large part of his army as soon as the season will permit him to act in that climate.

After Count d'Estaing left the harbor of Boston, he proceeded to the West Indies, where he operated during the winter, took St. Vincent and Grenada, and had a naval engagement with Admiral Byron's fleet. It was expected, that he would return to the United States in the course of the summer, and M. Gérard, the French minister in Philadelphia, held several conferences with a committee of Congress respecting a concerted plan of action

between the French squadron and the American forces. For the same object M. Gérard went to camp, and held interviews with the Commander-in-chief, to whom Congress delegated the power of arranging and executing the whole business in such a manner as his judgment and prudence should dictate. Various plans were suggested and partly matured; but, as the unfortunate repulse of the French and American troops in their assault on Savannah, and the subsequent departure of Count d'Estaing from the coast, prevented their being carried into execution, they need not be explained in this place.

The intercourse with Washington on this occasion left favorable impressions on the mind of the French minister. In a letter to Count de Vergennes, written from camp, he said; "I have had many conversations with General Washington, some of which have continued for three hours. It is impossible for me briefly to communicate the fund of intelligence, which I have derived from him; but I shall do it in my letters as occasions shall present themselves. I will now say only, that I have formed as high an opinion of the powers of his mind, his moderation, his patriotism, and his virtues, as I had before from common report conceived of his military talents, and of the

incalculable services he has rendered to his country." The same sentiments were often repeated by the successor of M. Gérard, and contributed to establish the unbounded confidence, which the French government placed in the American commander during the war.

Although the plans of cooperation failed, yet they were serviceable in embarrassing the schemes of the enemy. As soon as it was known that Count d'Estaing had arrived in Georgia, Sir Henry Clinton naturally supposed that he would proceed northward, and unite with Washington in a combined attack on New York. Alarmed for his safety in such an event, he caused Rhode Island to be evacuated, and drew to New York the garrison, which had been stationed nearly three years at that place, consisting at times of about six thousand men. Stony Point and Verplanck's Point were likewise evacuated. The appearance of Count d'Estaing's fleet on the coast retarded Sir Henry Clinton's southern expedition till near the end of December, when, having received reinforcements from Europe, he embarked about seven thousand troops, and sailed for South Carolina, under the convoy of Admiral Arbuthnot.

The campaign being now at an end, the army was again put into winter quarters, the

main body in the neighborhood of Morristown, strong detachments at West Point and other posts near the Hudson, and the cavalry in Connecticut. The head-quarters were at Morristown. The ill success of the allied arms at Savannah, and the indications of Sir Henry Clinton's designs against South Carolina, were reasons for sending more troops to General Lincoln's army; and, before the middle of December, two of the North Carolina regiments and the whole of the Virginia line marched to the south.

A descent upon Staten Island by a party under Lord Stirling, a retaliatory incursion of the enemy into New Jersey at Elizabethtown, and a skirmish near White Plains, were the only military events during the winter.

The army for the campaign in 1780 was nominally fixed by Congress at thirty-five thousand two hundred and eleven men. Each State was required to furnish its quota by the 1st day of April. No definite plan was adopted for the campaign, as the operations must depend on circumstances and the strength and condition of the enemy.

One of the greatest evils, which now afflicted the country, and which threatened the most alarming consequences, was the depreciation of the currency. Destitute of pecuniary re-

sources, and without the power of imposing direct taxes, Congress had, early in the war, resorted to the expedient of paper money. For a time, while the quantity was comparatively small, its credit was good; but in March, 1780, the enormous amount of two hundred millions of dollars had been issued, no part of which had been redeemed. At this time forty paper dollars were worth only one in specie. Prices rose as the money sank in value, and every branch of trade was unsettled and deranged. The effect was peculiarly oppressive on the troops, and was a principal reason for the exorbitant bounties allowed to them in the latter years of the war. The separate States likewise issued paper money, which increased the evil, without affording any adequate relief. The only remedy was taxation; but this was seldom pursued with vigor, owing, in part, to the distracted state of the times and the exhausted condition of the country, and in part also to State jealousy. As each State felt its burdens to be heavy, it was cautious how it added to them in a greater proportion than its neighbors; and thus all were reluctant to act, till impelled by the pressure of necessity.

So low had the credit of the currency fallen, that the commissaries found it extremely difficult, and in some cases impossible, to purchase

supplies for the army. Congress adopted a new method, by requiring each State to furnish a certain quantity of beef, pork, flour, corn, forage, and other articles, which were to be deposited in such places as the Commander-inchief should determine. The States were to be credited for the amount at a fixed valuation in specie. The system turned out to be impracticable. The multitude of hands into which the business was thrown, the want of proper authority to compel its prompt execution, the distance of several of the States from the army, and the consequent difficulties of transportation, all conspired to make it the most expensive, the most uncertain, and the least effectual method that could be devised. It added greatly to the embarrassments of the military affairs, and to the labor and perplexities of the Commander-in-chief, till it was ahandoned

To keep up the credit of the currency, Congress recommended to the States to pass laws making paper money a legal tender at its nominal value for the discharge of debts, which had been contracted to be paid in gold or silver. Such laws were enacted, and many debtors took advantage of them. When the army was at Morristown, a man of respectable standing lived in the neighborhood, who was assid-

uous in his civilities to Washington, which were kindly received and reciprocated. Unluckily this man paid his debts in the depreciated currency. Some time afterwards he called at head-quarters, and was introduced as usual to the General's apartment, where he was then conversing with some of his officers. He bestowed very little attention upon the visiter. The same thing occurred a second time, when he was more reserved than before. This was so different from his customary manner, that Lafayette, who was present on both occasions, could not help remarking it, and he said, after the man was gone; "General, this man seems to be much devoted to you, and yet you have scarcely noticed him." Washington replied. smiling; "I know I have not been cordial; I tried hard to be civil, and attempted to speak to him two or three times, but that Continental money stopped my mouth." He considered these laws unjust in principle, and iniquitous in their effects. He was himself a loser to a considerable amount by their operation.

At the beginning of April, when the States were to have completed their quotas of troops, the whole number under Washington's immediate command was no more than ten thousand four hundred rank and file. This number was soon diminished by sending the remainder of

the Maryland line and the Delaware regiment to the southern army. The British force at New York amounted to seventeen thousand three hundred effective men. From that time the army of the north consisted of such troops only, as were raised in the New England States, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. To hasten and give effect to the arrangements for the campaign, and draw more expeditiously from the States their quotas of soldiers and supplies, General Washington requested a committee of Congress to attend the army, with power to act in the name of that body for definite objects. The committee remained in camp between two and three months. General Schuyler, then a member of Congress, was one of the committee, and his experience, sound judgment, and energetic character, enabled him to render essential services in that capacity.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Arrival of the Marquis de Lafayette, with the Intelligence that a French Armament was on its Way to the United States. — The Army takes a Position near Hudson's River. — The French Squadron arrives at Newport. — Count de Rochambeau's Instructions. — French Fleet blockaded. — Interview between General Washington and the French Commander at Hartford. — The Treason of Arnold. — Plans for attacking New York.

Before the end of April, the Marquis de Lafayette arrived at Boston from France, with the cheering intelligence that the French government had fitted out an armament of naval and land forces, which might soon be expected in the United States. He proceeded immediately to Washington's head-quarters, and thence to Congress. Although many of the Americans had hoped that their arms would be strengthened by the troops of their allies, yet no indications had hitherto been given, which encouraged them to believe that any aid of this sort would be rendered. The experiment was also thought by some to be hazardous. The prejudice against French soldiers, which had been implanted and nurtured by the colonial wars, it was feared might lead to serious consequences, if French troops should be landed in the United States, and brought to act in

concert with the American army. So strongly was Count de Vergennes influenced by this apprehension, that he opposed the sending of troops to America, and advised that the efforts of France in succoring her ally should be expended in naval equipments, which he believed would be more effectual in annoying and weakening the common enemy. In this opinion, however, the other members of the cabinet did not concur, and it was resolved to send out a fleet with a body of troops to operate on land. Lafayette was principally instrumental in effecting this decision. It was a point upon which he had set his heart before he left America, and it may be presumed that he previously ascertained the sentiments of Washington. At any rate, his observation while in the country had convinced him, that French troops would be well received; and he had the address to bring the majority of the ministry to the same way of thinking.

In the month of June, General Knyphausen crossed over with such a force as he could spare from New York, and made an incursion into New Jersey. He was met by detachments from the American army, and some smart skirmishing ensued, particularly at Springfield, where the encounter lasted several hours. The

enemy were driven back, and they retired to Staten Island.

The object of this adventure could not easily be ascertained. General Washington at first supposed it to be a feint to amuse him in that quarter, while a more formidable force should be suddenly pushed up the Hudson to attack the posts in the Highlands. This opinion was countenanced by the arrival, just at that time, of Sir Henry Clinton from his successful expedition against Charleston. No such attempt being made, however, the only effect was to draw General Washington's army nearer the Hudson, where he took a position in which he could act in defence of New Jersey or the Highlands, as occasion might require.

News at length came, that the French fleet had entered the harbor of Newport, in Rhode Island, on the 10th of July. The armament consisted of seven or eight ships of the line, two frigates, two bombs, and upwards of five thousand troops. The fleet was commanded by the Chevalier de Ternay, and the army by the Count de Rochambeau. This was called the first division. Another, being detained for the want of transports, was left at Brest almost ready to sail, which it was said would soon follow.

The instructions from the ministry to Count

de Rochambeau, were extremely judicious, and contrived in every part to secure harmony between the American and French armies. The general and the troops were to be in all cases under the command of General Washington. When the two armies were united, the French troops were to be considered as auxiliaries, and to yield precedence by taking the left. American officers were to command French officers of equal rank, and holding commissions of the same dates; and, in all military acts and capitulations, the American generals were to be named first and to sign first. These instructions, expressed in clear and positive terms, were made known to General Washington by Lafayette before the troops landed. A copy in detail was likewise sent to him by Count de Rochambeau. They produced all the happy effects, which could have been anticipated. Perfect harmony subsisted not only between the armies, but between the people and the French troops, from their first arrival in the country till their final departure. The Continental officers, by the recommendation of General Washington, wore cockades of black and white intermixed, as a compliment to the French troops, and a symbol of friendship; the former color being that of the American cockade, and the latter that of the French.

A plan of combined operations against the enemy in New York was drawn up by General Washington, and forwarded to Count de Rochambeau by the hands of Lafavette, who went to Newport for the purpose of making explanations, and concerting arrangements with the French general and admiral. This plan had for its basis the naval superiority of the French over the English, by which the fleet of the latter might be attacked to advantage, or at least blocked up in the harbor of New York. At the present time, however, this was not the case. The arrival of Admiral Graves, with six ships of the line, had increased the British naval force considerably beyond that of the Chevalier de Ternay; and it was agreed that nothing could be done, till he should be reinforced by the second division from France, or by the squadron of the Count de Guichen, which was expected from the West Indies.

Forewarned by the British ministry of the destination of the French armament, Sir Henry Clinton made seasonable preparations to meet it, and requested Admiral Arbuthnot to be ready with his fleet. After considerable delay he embarked six thousand troops at Frog's Neck, intending to proceed through the Sound and cooperate with the fleet in an at-

tack on the French at Newport. In the mean time Count de Rochambeau, aided by General Heath, then present with the French army, called in the militia of the neighboring country, and increased the force at Newport so much, that Sir Henry Clinton, despairing of success, landed his men at Whitestone, on Long Island, and returned to New York, without effecting any part of his object. Another reason for his sudden return was, that Washington had drawn his army across the Hudson, and taken a position on the east side of that river, from which he might attack the city during the absence of so large a portion of the troops. It was Sir Henry Clinton's first hope, that, by the aid of the fleet, he should be able to complete his expedition against Newport, and come back to New York before Washington could assume an attitude which would menace the city; but in this he was disappointed.

Having a decided naval superiority, however, Admiral Arbuthnot blockaded the French squadron in the harbor of Newport, and Count de Rochambeau's army was obliged to remain there for its protection. This state of things continued through the season, and no military enterprise was undertaken. The second French division was blockaded at Brest, and never

came to America; and the Count de Guichen sailed from the West Indies to France without touching in any part of the United States. Both parties, therefore, stood on the defensive, watching each other's motions, and depending on the operations of the British and French fleets. General Washington recrossed the Hudson, and encamped below Orangetown, or Tappan, on the borders of New Jersey, which station he held till winter.

In this interval of leisure, a conference between the commanders of the two allied armies was suggested by Count de Rochambeau, and readily assented to by General, Washington. They met at Hartford in Connecticut, on the 21st of September. During the absence of General Washington, the army was left under the command of General Greene. The interview was more interesting and serviceable in cementing a personal friendship, and promoting amicable relations between the parties, than important in establishing an ulterior system of action. Nothing indeed could be positively agreed upon, since a naval superiority was absolutely essential to any enterprise by land, and this superiority did not exist. All the plans that were brought into view, therefore, rested on contingencies, and in the end these were unfavorable to a combined operation.

At this time General Arnold held the command at West Point and other fortified posts in the Highlands. No officer in the American army had acquired higher renown for military talents, activity, and courage. He had signalized himself at the taking of Ticonderoga, by his expedition through the wilderness to Quebec, in a naval engagement on Lake Champlain, in a rencontre with the enemy at Danbury, and above all in the decisive action at Saratoga. When the British evacuated Philadelphia, he was appointed to the command in that city, being disabled by his wounds for immediate active service. Arrogant, fond of display, and extravagant in his style of living, he was soon involved in difficulties, which led to his ruin. His debts accumulated, and, to relieve himself from embarrassment and indulge his passion for parade, he resorted to practices discreditable to him as an officer and a man. Heavy charges were exhibited against him by the President and Council of Pennsylvania, which were referred to a court-martial. After a thorough investigation, the court sentenced him to receive a public reprimand from the Commander-in-chief. He had previously presented to Congress large claims against the United States on account of money, which he said he had expended for the public service in

Canada. These claims were examined, and in part disallowed. In the opinion of many, they were such as to authorize a suspicion of his integrity, if not to afford evidence of deliberate fraud.

These censures, added to the desperate state of his private affairs, were more than the pride of Arnold could bear. At once to take revenge, and to retrieve his fortunes, he resolved to become a traitor to his country, and seek employment in the ranks of the enemy. This purpose was so far fixed in his mind fifteen months before its consummation, that he then began, and continued afterwards, a secret correspondence with Major André, adjutant-general of the British army. The more easily to effect his designs, he sought and obtained the command at West Point, where he arrived the first week in August. From that time it was his aim, by a plan concerted with the British general, to deliver West Point and the other posts of the Highlands into the hands of the enemv.

The absence of Washington from the army, on his visit to Hartford, was thought to afford a fit occasion for bringing the affair to a crisis. The Vulture sloop of war ascended the Hudson, and anchored in Haverstraw Bay, six or seven miles below King's Ferry. It was con-

trived that a meeting should take place between Arnold and André, for the purpose of making arrangements. André went ashore from the Vulture in the night on the west side of the river, where Arnold was waiting to receive him. They remained together in that place till the dawn of day, when, their business not being finished, Arnold persuaded him to go to the house of Joshua H. Smith, at some distance from the river, where he was concealed during the day. Arnold left him in the morning and went to West Point. It was André's expectation and wish to return to the Vulture; but, this not being practicable, he left Smith's house in the dusk of the evening on horseback, and crossed the river at King's Ferry with a written pass signed by Arnold, in which the bearer was called John Anderson. Before leaving Smith's house, he exchanged his regimentals for a citizen's dress, over which he wore a dark, loose great-coat.

The next day while riding alone towards New York, he was suddenly stopped in the road by three armed militia-men, Paulding, Williams, and Van Wart, about half a mile north of Tarrytown. They searched him, and found papers secreted in his boots. From this discovery they inferred that he was a spy; and, taking him back to the nearest American

outpost at North Castle, they delivered him over to Lieutenant-Colonel Jameson, who was stationed there with a party of dragoons. Jameson examined the papers, and knew them to be in the handwriting of Arnold. They were of a very extraordinary character, containing an exact account of the state of things at West Point, and of the strength of the garrison, with remarks on the different works, and a report of a council of war recently held at the head-quarters of the army. Jameson was amazed and bewildered. He sent a messenger to Arnold with a letter, stating that a prisoner, who called himself John Anderson, had been brought to him and was then in custody, and that papers had been found upon his person, which seemed to him of a dangerous tendency. At the same time he despatched an express to General Washington, then supposed to be on the road returning from Hartford. This express was the bearer of the papers, which had been taken from André's boots.

The next morning André was sent, under the charge of Major Tallmadge, to Colonel Sheldon's quarters at New Salem for greater security. Being now convinced that there was no hope of escape, he wrote a letter to General Washington revealing his name and true character. Till this time no one about him knew who he was, or that he held a military rank. He submitted the letter to Major Tallmadge and other officers, who read it with astonishment.

Having finished his interview with the French commanders, Washington returned from Hartford by the upper route through Fishkill. Consequently the express, who was sent with the papers, and who took the lower route, by which Washington had gone to Hartford, did not meet him, but came back to North Castle. In the mean time Washington pursued his journey by the way of Fishkill to West Point. Two or three hours before he reached Arnold's house, which was on the side of the river opposite to West Point and at a considerable distance below, the messenger arrived there with the letter from Jameson, by which Arnold was informed of the capture of André. He read it with some degree of agitation, and, pretending that he was suddenly called to West Point, mounted a horse standing at the door, rode to the river, entered his barge, and ordered the men to row down the stream. When the barge approached King's Ferry, he held up a white handkerchief, and the officer who commanded at Verplanck's Point, supposing it to be a flag-boat, allowed it to pass without inspection. Arnold proceeded

directly to the Vulture, which was still at anchor in the river near the place where André had left it.

Washington arrived at Arnold's house, and went over to West Point, without hearing any thing of Arnold. On his return, however, in the afternoon he received the abovementioned letter from André, and the papers found in his boots, which had been forwarded from North Castle. The plot was now unravelled. The first thing to be done was to secure the posts. Orders were immediately despatched to all the principal officers, and every precaution was taken.

André was first removed to West Point, and thence to the head-quarters of the army at Tappan. A board of officers was summoned, and directed to inquire into the case of Major André, report the facts, and give their opinion, both in regard to the nature of his offence, and to the punishment that ought to be awarded. Various papers were laid before the board, and André himself was questioned, and desired to make such statements and explanations as he chose. After a full investigation the board reported, that the prisoner came on shore in the night, to hold a private and secret interview with General Arnold; that he changed his dress within the American lines, and passed

the guards in a disguised habit and under a feigned name; that he was taken in the same disguised habit, having in his possession several papers, which contained intelligence for the enemy; and that he ought to be considered as a spy, and, according to the law and usage of nations, to suffer death. General Washington approved this decision; and Major André was executed at Tappan on the 2d of October.

While André's case was pending, Sir Henry Clinton used every effort in his power to rescue him from his fate. He wrote to General Washington, and endeavored to show, that he could not be regarded as a spy, inasmuch as he came on shore at the request of an American general, and afterwards acted by his direction. Connected with all the circumstances, this argument could have no weight. That he was drawn into a snare by a traitor did not make him the less a spy. As the guilt of Arnold was the cause of all the evils that followed, an exchange of him for André would have been accepted; but no such proposal was intimated by the British general; and perhaps it could not be done consistently with honor and the course already pursued. From the moment of his capture till that of his execution, the conduct of André was marked with a candor, self-possession, and dignity, which betokened a

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brave and noble spirit. There was no stronger trait in the character of Washington than humanity; the misfortunes and sufferings of others touched him keenly; and his feelings were deeply moved at the part he was compelled to act in consenting to the death of André; yet justice to the office he held, and to the cause for which his countrymen were shedding their blood, left him no alternative.*

While these operations were going on at the north, all the intelligence from the south gave evidence, that affairs in that quarter were assuming a gloomy aspect. The British forces, with Lord Cornwallis at their head, were overrunning the Carolinas, and preparations were making in New York to detach a squadron with troops to fall upon Virginia. The defeat of General Gates near Camden, in South Carolina, was a heavy blow upon the Americans, and left them in a state from which it was feared they would not soon recover. Congress requested General Washington to appoint an officer to succeed Gates in the command of the southern army. With his usual determination and judgment he selected General Greene, who repaired to the theatre of action, in which he

^{*}A full and detailed account of the particulars relating to this subject is contained in Sparks's Life and Treason of Arnold.

was so eminently distinguished during the subsequent years of the war.

Gaining an increased confidence in the Commander-in-chief, which a long experience of his wisdom and disinterestedness authorized, Congress at length adopted the important measures, in regard to the army, which he had earnestly and repeatedly advised and enforced. They decreed that all the troops, thenceforward to be raised, should be enlisted to serve during the war; and that all the officers, who continued in the service to the end of the war, should be entitled to half-pay for life. Washington ever believed, that, if this system had been pursued from the beginning, it would have shortened the war, or at least have caused a great diminution in the expense. Unfortunately the States did not comply with the former part of the requisition, but adhered to the old method of filling up their quotas with men raised for three years and for shorter terms. The extreme difficulty of procuring recruits was the reason assigned for persevering in this practice.

Lafayette commanded six battalions of light infantry, stationed in advance of the main army. He projected a descent upon Staten Island, but was prevented from executing it by the want of boats. A plan was likewise formed

for a general attack on the north part of New York Island. The enemy's posts were reconnoitred, extensive preparations were made, and a large foraging party was sent into Westchester County to mask the design, and draw the attention of the enemy that way. But the sudden appearance of several armed vessels in the river caused the enterprise to be deferred and finally abandoned. The foraging expedition, conducted by General Stark, was successful.

The army went into winter quarters at the end of November; the Pennsylvania line near Morristown, the New Jersey regiments at Pompton, and the eastern troops in the Highlands. The head-quarters of the Commander-in-chief were at New Windsor. The French army remained at Newport, except the Duke de Lauzun's legion, which was cantoned at Lebanon in Connecticut.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Mutiny of the Pennsylvania and New Jersey Troops. — Agency of Washington in procuring Supplies from France. — Operations of the Enemy in the Chesapeake. — Detachment to Virginia under Lafayette. — General Washington visits Count de Rochambeau at Newport. — Condition of the Army. — Interview between the American and French Commanders at Weathersfield. — Plan of Operations. — A Combined Attack on New York proposed.

THE year 1781 opened with an event, which filled the country with alarm, and threatened dangerous consequences. On the 1st of January a mutiny broke out among the Pennsylvania troops, stationed near Morristown, and about thirteen hundred men paraded under arms, refused obedience to their officers, killed one captain, mortally wounded another, and committed various outrages. The mutineers marched in a body towards Princeton with six fieldpieces, avowing their intention to proceed to Philadelphia, and demand from Congress a redress of their grievances. They complained that their pay was in arrears, that they were obliged to receive it in a depreciated currency, that many of the soldiers were detained beyond the term of their enlistment, and that they had suffered every hardship for the want

of money, provisions, and clothing. By the prudence and good management of General Wayne, who took care to supply them with provisions on their march, they were kept from plundering the inhabitants and other excesses. He sent the intelligence of the revolt by an express to General Washington, who, considering the number of the mutineers, and the apparent justice of their complaints, recommended to him not to use force, which might inflame their passions, increase opposition, keep alive resentment, and tempt them to turn about and go to the enemy, who would not fail to hold out alluring offers. He advised General Wayne to draw from them a statement of their grievances, and promise to represent the case faithfully to Congress and the State of Pennsylvania, and endeavor to obtain redress.

These judicious counsels had the effect desired. A committee of Congress, joined by the President of Pennsylvania, met the revolters at Trenton, and made proposals to them, which were accepted, and they gave up their arms. An ambiguity in the written terms of enlistment was one of the principal causes of dissatisfaction. The agreement on the part of the soldiers was, to serve for three years or during the war. By the interpretation, which

the officers gave to these expressions, they bound the soldiers to serve to the end of the war; whereas the soldiers insisted that they engaged for three years only, or during the war if it should come to an end before the three years had elapsed. Accordingly they demanded a discharge at the expiration of that period. This construction being allowed, it was the means of disbanding a large part of the Pennsylvania line for the winter, but it was recruited again in the spring to its original complement. The revolters were indignant at the suspicion of their going to the enemy, and scorned the idea, as they expressed it, of turning Arnolds. Two emissaries sent among them with overtures from Sir Henry Clinton were given up, tried by a court-martial, and executed.

Not knowing how far this example might infect the troops generally, the sufferings of all of whom were not less than those of the Pennsylvania line, General Washington took speedy measures to prevent the repetition of such a scene as had just occurred. He ordered a thousand trusty men to be selected from the regiments in the Highlands, and held in readiness to march, with four days' provisions, at the shortest notice. The wisdom of this precaution was soon put to the proof; for news

came, that the New Jersey troops, stationed at Pompton and Chatham, were in a state of mutiny, having risen in arms against their officers, and threatened to march to Trenton, where the legislature of the State was then in session, and demand redress at the point of the bayo-The case required promptness and ener-Six hundred men were put under the command of General Howe, with orders to march and crush the revolt by force, unless the men should yield unconditional submission and return to their duty. These orders were faithfully executed. Taken by surprise, the mutineers were compelled to parade without their arms, make concessions to their officers. and promise obedience. To impress them with the enormity of their guilt, and deter them and others from future acts of the kind, two of the ringleaders were tried by a field court-martial and shot. By this summary proceeding the spirit of mutiny in the army was subdued

In the midst of these distracting events Washington was employed, at the request of Congress, in affording important counsels to Colonel John Laurens, who had been appointed on a mission to France, for the purpose of obtaining a loan and military supplies. Such was the deranged state of the currency, so

low had the resources of the country been drained, and so feeble was the power of drawing them out, that, in the opinion of all, the military efforts of the United States could not be exerted with a vigor suited to the exigency of the occasion, nor even with any thing more than a languishing inactivity, unless sustained by succors from their allies both in money and supplies for the army. The sentiments of Washington, communicating the fruits of his knowledge, experience, and judgment, with the weight of his name, were thought essential to produce a just impression on the French cabinet. He wrote a letter to Colonel Laurens, remarkable for its appropriateness and ability, containing a clear and forcible representation of facts, with arguments in support of the application of Congress, which was first presented by that commissioner to Dr. Franklin, and afterwards laid before the ministry and the King. The influence of this letter, in procuring the aids solicited from the French government, may be inferred from the circumstance of a recent loan being accompanied with the suggestion, that the money to be appropriated for the army should be left at the disposal of General Washington.

The British general seems not to have meditated any offensive operations in the northern

States for the coming campaign. His attention was chiefly directed to the south, where such detachments as could be spared from his army at New York were to cooperate with Lord Cornwallis. Sixteen hundred men, with a proportionate number of armed vessels, were sent into the Chesapeake under the command of Arnold, who was eager to prove his zeal for the cause of his new friends by the mischief he could do to those, whom he had deserted and sought to betray. Before his arrival in the Chesapeake, General Leslie had left Virginia and sailed for Charleston; so that Arnold received the undivided honor of his exploits, and, what he valued more highly, a liberal share of the booty that fell into his hands. He burnt Richmond, seized private property, and committed depredations in sundry places.

About the middle of January the British fleet blockading the harbor of Newport was so much shattered and dispersed by a violent storm, that the scale of superiority turned in favor of the French squadron. The Chevalier de Ternay had recently died, and M. Destouches, who succeeded him in the command, reconnoitred the enemy's fleet after the storm, and, finding it well secured in Gardiner's Bay, at the east end of Long Island, he was not inclined to seek an engagement. Taking ad-

vantage of the opportunity, however, he detached a ship of the line and two frigates under M. de Tilly to the Chesapeake, with the design to blockade Arnold's squadron, and to act against him in concert with the American troops on land. As soon as General Washington heard of the damage suffered by the British ships, he wrote to Count de Rochambeau, recommending that M. Destouches should proceed immediately to Virginia with his whole fleet and a thousand troops from the French army. This advice was not received till after the departure of M. de Tilly from Newport, when it was too late to comply with it, as the British fleet in the mean time had gained strength, and made it hazardous for M. Destouches to leave the harbor.

M. de Tilly's expedition was only in part successful. He entered the Chesapeake, but Arnold drew his vessels so high up the Elizabeth River, that they could not be reached by the French line-of-battle ship; and one of the frigates ran aground, and was set afloat again with difficulty. As M. de Tilly could not remain long in the Chesapeake without the risk of being blockaded by a British force, he put to sea, and arrived at Newport after an absence of fifteen days.

Although the British had repaired their dam-

aged vessels, yet by the junction of M. de Tilly an equality was restored to the French; and M. Destouches, in conformity to the recommendation of General Washington, resolved on an expedition to Virginia with his whole naval force, to which Count de Rochambeau added eleven hundred troops, commanded by Baron de Viomenil. The French were pursued by Admiral Arbuthnot with all his blockading squadron, and overtaken near the capes of Virginia, where an action ensued, which terminated with nearly equal honor to both parties. The object of the expedition was thus defeated, unless it was a part of M. Destouches's purpose to bring on a naval engagement, which is not improbable. The fleet returned to Newport without attempting to enter the Chesapeake.

The moment Washington received the intelligence, that M. de Tilly had sailed to the southward, he detached twelve hundred men from his army to proceed by land to the Chesapeake and coöperate with the French against Arnold. At the head of this detachment he placed the Marquis de Lafayette, being influenced in his choice both by a political motive, and by his confidence in the ability and bravery of that officer. The appointment was complimentary to the allies, and it was thought

that harmony would be more surely preserved by a commander, who was beloved by the American troops, and respected for his rank and character by his own countrymen. Lafayette marched from Hudson's River on the 20th of February. On his arrival in Virginia, his seniority of rank would give him the command of all the Continental troops in that State, and of all the militia drawn into the service to oppose the enemy in the waters of the Chesapeake. Hitherto Baron Steuben had conducted the operations against Arnold in Virginia, having been detained for that purpose when on his way to join General Greene.

To mature the plans for the campaign, and to communicate with the French commanders, on points that could not be safely intrusted to writing, General Washington made a journey to Newport. He left head-quarters on the 2d of March, and was absent nearly three weeks. He arrived a day or two before M. Destouches's departure on the expedition above mentioned. The citizens of Newport received him with a public address, expressive of their attachment, their gratitude for his services, and the joy they felt at seeing him among them. In his reply, he took care to reciprocate and confirm the sentiments, which they had declared in regard to the allies. "The conduct of the

French army and fleet," said he, "of which the inhabitants testify so grateful and so affectionate a sense, at the same time that it evinces the wisdom of the commanders and the discipline of the troops, is a new proof of the magnanimity of the nation. It is a further demonstration of that generous zeal and concern for the happiness of America, which brought them to our assistance, a happy presage of future harmony, a pleasing evidence that an intercourse between the two nations will more and more cement the union, by the solid and lasting ties of mutual affection." In short, the meeting between the commanders of the allied armies was in all respects satisfactory to both parties; but the projects of the enemy were so uncertain, and future operations depended so much on contingent and unforeseen events, that nothing more could be agreed upon, than general arrangements for acting in concert at such times and places as circumstances should require.

Although the design of the British general was not then known, it appeared afterward that he aimed to transfer the seat of war to the Chesapeake, and if possible to Pennsylvania. This scheme was urged by Lord Cornwallis, who was of the opinion that it ought to be pursued even at the expense of abandoning

New York. To aid in effecting it, Sir Henry Clinton sent another detachment to Virginia, consisting of two thousand men, under General Phillips, who was ordered to coöperate with Arnold, and ultimately with Lord Cornwallis, it being presumed that Cornwallis would make his way through North Carolina, and be able to succor these troops in Virginia, and probably to join them with his army.

The first object of Lafayette's expedition was to act in conjunction with the French fleet; but, as no part of the fleet entered the Chesapeake, he was disappointed in that pur-His troops advanced no further than Annapolis, although he went forward himself to Williamsburg. Having ascertained that an English squadron had entered the Chesapeake, instead of the French, he immediately prepared to return with his detachment to the main army near the Hudson. He proceeded by water to the Head of Elk, where he received additional instructions from General Washington, directing him to march to the south, and either meet the enemy in Virginia, or continue onward to the southern army, as should be advised by General Greene.

The enemy ascended the Chesapeake Bay and its principal rivers, with their small armed vessels, plundering and laying waste the prop-

erty of the inhabitants. One of these vessels came up the Potomac to Mount Vernon; and the manager of the estate, with the hope of saving the houses from being pillaged and burnt, yielded to the demands of the officers in a manner, which excited the regret and displeasure of Washington. In reply to his manager, who had informed him of the particulars, he said; "I am very sorry to hear of your loss; I am a little sorry to hear of my own; but that which gives me most concern is, that you should go on board the enemy's vessels, and furnish them with refreshments. It would have been a less painful circumstance to me to have heard, that, in consequence of your noncompliance with their request, they had burned my house and laid the plantation in ruins. You ought to have considered yourself as my representative, and should have reflected on the bad example of communicating with the enemy, and making a voluntary offer of refreshments to them with a view to prevent a conflagration. It was not in your power, I acknowledge, to prevent them from sending a flag on shore, and you did right to meet it; but you should, in the same instant that the business of it was unfolded, have declared explicitly, that it was improper for you to yield to the request; after which, if they had proceeded to

help themselves by force, you could but have submitted; and, being unprovided for defence, this was to be preferred to a feeble opposition, which only serves as a pretext to burn and destroy." The reader need not be reminded of the accordance of these sentiments with the noble disinterestedness, which regulated his conduct through the whole of his public life.

An extract from his diary, written on the 1st of May, will exhibit in a striking manner the condition of the army at that time, and the prospects of the campaign.

"To have a clearer understanding of the entries, which may follow, it would be proper to recite in detail our wants and our prospects; but this alone would be a work of much time and great magnitude. It may suffice to give the sum of them, which I shall do in a few words. Instead of having magazines filled with provisions, we have a scanty pittance scattered here and there in the different States; instead of having our arsenals well supplied with military stores, they are poorly provided and the workmen all leaving them; instead of having the various articles of field-equipage in readiness to be delivered, the quartermastergeneral, as the dernier resort, according to his account, is but now applying to the several States to provide these things for their troops

respectively; instead of having a regular system of transportation established upon credit, or funds in the quartermaster's hands to defray the contingent expenses of it, we have neither the one nor the other, and all that business, or a great part of it, being done by military impress, we are daily and hourly oppressing the people, souring their tempers, and alienating their affections; instead of having the regiments completed to the new establishment, which ought to have been done agreeably to the requisitions of Congress, scarce any State in the Union has at this hour an eighth part of its quota in the field, and little prospect that I can see of ever getting more than half; in a word, instead of having every thing in readiness to take the field, we have nothing; and, instead of having the prospect of a glorious offensive campaign before us, we have a bewildered and gloomy defensive one, unless we should receive a powerful aid of ships, land troops, and money from our generous allies, and these at present are too contingent to build upon."

Happily the train of affairs took a more favorable turn than he anticipated. In a short time he received the cheering intelligence, that Count de Barras had arrived in Boston harbor with a French frigate, that other vessels and

a reinforcement of troops from France might soon be looked for, and that a fleet under the Count de Grasse would sail from the West Indies to the United States in July or August. Another meeting between the commanders of the allied armies was thus rendered necessary. It took place at Weathersfield, in Connecticut, on the 22d of May. Count de Barras, having succeeded M. Destouches in the command of the French squadron, was detained at Newport by the appearance of a British fleet off the harbor; but the Marquis de Chastellux, a major-general in the army, accompanied Count de Rochambeau. On the part of the Americans were the Commander-in-chief, General Knox, and General Duportail.

The two principal objects brought under consideration were; first, a southern expedition to act against the enemy in Virginia; secondly, a combined attack on New York. The French commander leaned to the former; but he yielded to the stronger reasons for the latter, which was decidedly preferred by General Washington. A movement to the south must be wholly by land, the French fleet being inferior to that of Admiral Arbuthnot, by which it was blockaded, and of course not in a condition to go to sea. The difficulty and expense of transportation, the season of the year in

which the troops would reach Virginia, being the hottest part of summer, and the waste of men always attending a long march, were formidable objections to the first plan. It was believed, also, that the enemy's force in New York had been so much weakened by detachments, that Sir Henry Clinton would be compelled either to sacrifice that place and its dependencies, or recall part of his troops from the south to defend them.

It was therefore agreed, that Count de Rochambeau should march as soon as possible from Newport, and form a junction with the American army near Hudson's River. Before leaving Weathersfield, a circular letter was written by General Washington to the governors of the eastern States, acquainting them with the result of the conference, and urging them to fill up their quotas of Continental troops with all possible despatch, and to hold a certain number of militia in readiness to march at a week's notice. If men could not be obtained for three years, or during the war, he recommended that they should be enlisted for the campaign only, deeming the exigency to be of the greatest importance, both in a military point of view and in its political bearings; for the zeal of the Americans, and their willingness to make sacrifices for the common

cause, would be estimated by the manner in which they should now second the efforts of their allies, and contribute to give effect to their proffered services. A body of militia was likewise to be called to Newport, for the defence of the French fleet in the harbor after the departure of the troops. The two commanders returned to their respective armies, and prepared to put their plan in execution.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Junction between the American and French Armies. — Intelligence from Count de Grasse in the West Indies changes the Objects of the Campaign. — Successful Operations of Lafayette against Cornwallis. — The combined Armies cross the Hudson and march to Virginia. — The Fleet of Count de Grasse enters the Chesapeake. — Siege of Yorktown. — Capitulation. — The American Army returns to Hudson's River; the French remains in Virginia.

The attention of the Commander-in-chief was but partially taken up with the affairs under his own eye. He held a constant correspondence with General Greene and Lafayette, who kept him informed of the operations at the south, and asked his advice and direction on points of difficulty and importance. The western posts beyond the Alleganies were also under his command, and required much of his care. Incursions of the enemy from Canada kept the northern frontier in a state of alarm, and a considerable portion of the New York troops was called away for the protection of that quarter.

The wants of the army, especially in the article of bread, were at this time relieved by the generous and spirited exertions of Robert Morris, recently appointed Superintendent of Finance by Congress. He procured from con-

tractors two thousand barrels of flour, promising hard money, and pledging his own credit for its payment. The act was voluntary, and the relief seasonable. It was one of the many valuable services, which that distinguished patriot rendered to his country.

General Washington drew the several parts of his army out of their quarters, and took his first position near Peekskill, but soon advanced towards New York, and encamped on the 4th of July near Dobbs's Ferry, and about twelve miles from Kingsbridge. On the 6th he was joined by Count de Rochambeau with the French army, which had marched in four divisions from Providence by way of Hartford. The Americans encamped in two lines, with their right resting on the Hudson. The French occupied the left, in a single line extending to the river Brunx.

Preparations were made for an attack on the north part of New York Island a short time before the junction of the two armies. General Lincoln descended the Hudson with a detachment of eight hundred men in boats for this purpose, landed above Haerlem River, and took possession of the high ground near Kingsbridge. At the same time the Duke de Lauzun was to advance from East Chester with his legion, and fall upon Delancey's corps of

refugees at Morrisania. Unforeseen causes prevented the attack, and Lauzun did not arrive in season to effect his part of the enterprise. After some skirmishing the enemy's outposts were withdrawn to the other side of Haerlem River. General Washington came forward with the main army as far as Valentine's Hill, four miles from Kingsbridge, to support General Lincoln in case it should be necessary. The troops lay upon their arms during the night, and the next day retired to the encampment near Dobbs's Ferry.

At this place the two armies continued six weeks. A plan of a general attack was formed, and the two commanders reconnoitred the enemy's works, first by passing over the Hudson and viewing them across the river from the elevated grounds between Dobbs's Ferry and Fort Lee, and next at Kingsbridge and other places in its vicinity. But the recruits came in so tardily from the States, that the army was never in a condition to authorize an undertaking of such magnitude without the coöperation of a French fleet superior to the British; more especially as a reinforcement of about three thousand Hessian recruits arrived in New York from Europe. A despatch had early been sent to Count de Grasse in the West Indies, advising him to sail directly to Sandy

Hook, and thus secure a naval superiority. On this contingency depended the execution of the plan.

While these operations were in progress, a French frigate arrived at Newport with a letter from Count de Grasse, dated at Cape François in St. Domingo, stating that he should shortly sail from that place, with his whole fleet and three thousand two hundred land troops, for the Chesapeake. This letter was received by General Washington on the 14th of August. It produced an immediate change in the objects of the campaign. The engagements of Count de Grasse in the West Indies were such, that he could not promise to remain on the coast beyond the middle of October. It being doubtful whether, with all the force that could be collected, and with the fairest prospect of ultimate success, the siege of New York could be brought to an issue by that time, it was resolved at once to abandon that project, and proceed to Virginia with the whole of the French troops, and such a part of the American army as could be spared from the defence of the posts on Hudson's River and in the Highlands. In this decision Count de Rochambeau cordially united, and the march to the south began without delay.

Cornwallis had advanced from North Caroli-

na, formed a junction with the British detachment in the Chesapeake, and overrun the lower counties of Virginia; but he was checked by the active exertions and skilful manœuvres of Lafayette, whose generalship and prudent conduct merited the greatest applause. This was peculiarly gratifying to Washington, who in case of failure, might have been censured for intrusting to so young an officer the hazardous experiment of encountering one of the most experienced and accomplished generals of the age. "Be assured, my dear Marquis," said Washington in writing to him, "your conduct meets my warmest approbation, as it must that of everybody. Should it ever be said, that my attachment to you betrayed me into partiality, you have only to appeal to facts to refute any such charge." Count de Vergennes bore similar testimony. In a letter to Lafayette he said; "I have followed you step by step through your whole campaign in Virginia, and should often have trembled for you, if I had not been confident in your wisdom. It requires no common ability and skill to enable a man to sustain himself as you have done, and during so long a time, before such a general as Lord Cornwallis, who is lauded for his talents in war; and this too, with such a great disproportion in your forces." The minister of

war was also commanded by the King to express the royal approbation in the warmest terms, and to assure Lafayette of his being raised to the rank of field-marshal in the French army, when his services should be no longer required in the United States.

It was the first object of Washington and Rochambeau to act against Cornwallis in Virginia. Should that general retreat to North Carolina, it was then intended to pursue him with a part of the combined army, and to embark the remainder on board the French fleet, and proceed with it to Charleston, which was at that time held by the British. The two armies crossed the Hudson at King's Ferry, and marched by different routes to Trenton, and thence through Philadelphia to the Head of Elk. The stores and baggage, with one regiment, passed down the Delaware by water to Christiana Creek. Sir Henry Clinton was of course ignorant of the expected approach of Count de Grasse to the Chesapeake, and much finesse was used to misguide and bewilder him in regard to the design of these movements; it being apprehended, that, suspecting the real object, he might send reinforcements to Virginia before the arrival of the French fleet. Accordingly fictitious letters were written and put in the way of being intercepted,

and a deceptive provision of ovens, forage, and boats was made in New Jersey, by which the British general would be led to suppose, that an attack was intended from that quarter. These stratagems were successful to the extent anticipated; and the troops had made considerable progress in their march, before Sir Henry Clinton was fully aware of their destination.

General Heath was left in the command on Hudson's River. The moving army was put under the charge of General Lincoln. The soldiers, being mostly from the eastern and middle States, marched with reluctance to the southward, and showed strong symptoms of discontent when they passed through Philadelphia. This had been foreseen by General Washington, and he urged the Superintendent of Finance to advance to them a month's pay in hard money. But there was no such money in the treasury. Mr. Morris succeeded, however, in borrowing for this purpose twenty thousand hard dollars from the French commander, which he promised to return within thirty days.

General Washington and Count de Rochambeau preceded the army; and the former, after stopping for a short time in Philadelphia, hastened forward to Mount Vernon, which lay in his route. This casual visit was the first he had paid to his home since he left it to attend the second Continental Congress, a period of six years and five months; so entirely had he sacrificed his time, personal interests, and local attachments to the service of his country. Nor did he now remain any longer than to await the arrival of Count de Rochambeau, whom he had left at Baltimore. The two generals then made all haste to the head-quarters of Lafayette's army near Williamsburg, which they reached on the 14th of September.

In the mean time Count de Grasse, with his whole fleet, consisting of twenty-six ships of the line and several frigates entered the Chesapeake, after a partial engagement with Admiral Graves off the Capes. He had also been joined by the Count de Barras, with the French squadron from Newport. Three thousand men from the West Indies, commanded by the Marquis de St. Simon, had already landed, and united with Lafayette. Transports were immediately despatched up the Chesapeake, to bring down the French and American troops from the Head of Elk and Annapolis. For the purpose of concerting measures for a cooperation between the naval and land forces, the two commanders held a conference with Count de Grasse on board the Ville de Paris at Cape Henry.

Lord Cornwallis, expecting aid from Sir Henry Clinton, and hoping the British force at sea would be superior to the French, had taken possession of Yorktown and Gloucester, two places separated by York River, and nearly opposite to each other. The main part of his army was at Yorktown, around which he threw up strong works of defence, and prepared to sustain a siege. To this extremity he was at length reduced. All the troops being assembled, the American and French generals marched from the encampment near Williamsburg, and completely invested Yorktown on the 30th of September. The Americans were stationed on the right, and the French on the left, in a semicircular line, each wing resting on York River. The post at Gloucester was invested by Lauzun's legion, marines from the fleet, and Virginia militia, under the command of M. de Choisy, a brigadier-general in the French service.

The siege was carried on by the usual process of opening parallels, erecting batteries, firing shot, throwing shells, and storming redoubts. The enemy were neither idle nor inefficient in their efforts for defence and annoyance. The principal event was the storming of two redoubts at the same time; one by a party of the American light infantry, the other

by a detachment of French grenadiers and chasseurs; the former headed by Lafayette, the latter by the Baron de Viomenil. They were both successful. The assailants entered the redoubts with the bayonet, in a brave and spirited manner, under a heavy fire from the enemy. The advanced corps of the American party was led by Colonel Hamilton, "whose well-known talents and gallantry," said Lafayette in his report, "were most conspicuous and serviceable." Colonels Laurens, Gimat, and Barber were also distinguished in this assault.

The besiegers pushed forward their trenches, and kept up an incessant fire from their batteries, till the 17th of October, when, about ten o'clock in the morning, the enemy beat a parley, and Lord Cornwallis sent out a note to General Washington proposing a cessation of hostilities for twenty-four hours, and the appointment of commissioners on each side to settle the terms for surrendering the posts of Yorktown and Gloucester. In reply General Washington requested, that, as a preliminary step, his Lordship would communicate in writing, the terms on which he proposed to surrender. This was complied with, and hostilities ceased.

The basis of a capitulation, furnished by

the British general, was, that the garrisons should be prisoners of war, with the customary honors; that the British and German troops should be sent to Europe, under an engagement not to serve against France or America till released or exchanged; that all arms and public stores should be given up; that the officers and soldiers should retain their private property; and that the interest of several individuals in a civil capacity should be attended to. This last clause was designed to protect the traders and other Americans, who had joined the enemy.

Some of these points not being admissible, General Washington transmitted an answer the next day, in which he sketched the outlines of a capitulation, and informed Lord Cornwallis, that he was ready to appoint commissioners to digest the articles. All the troops in the garrisons were to be prisoners of war, and marched into such parts of the country as could most conveniently provide for their subsistence; the artillery, arms, accourrements, military chest, and public stores, with the shipping, boats, and all their furniture and apparel, were to be delivered up; the officers retaining their side-arms, and both the officers and soldiers preserving their baggage and effects, except such property as had been taken

in the country, which was to be reclaimed. The surrendering army was to receive the same honors as had been granted by the British to the garrison of Charleston. Upon these general terms a treaty was finally adjusted; the commissioners being Colonel Laurens and the Viscount de Noailles on the part of the Americans and French, and Colonel Dundas and Major Ross on that of the British. The articles of capitulation were signed on the 19th of October, and in the afternoon of that day the garrisons marched out and surrendered their arms.

The traders within the enemy's lines were not regarded as prisoners, and they were allowed a certain time to dispose of their property or remove it; but no provision was made for other persons in a civil capacity within the enemy's lines. At the request of Lord Cornwallis, however, the Bonetta sloop of war was left at his disposal for the purpose of sending an aid-de-camp with despatches to Sir Henry Clinton; and in this vessel, which was suffered to depart without examination, all persons of the above description took passage for New York; and thus the British commander was enabled to maintain his good faith towards those, who had joined him in the country, without including them in the terms of capitulation. The Bonetta, with her crew, guns, and stores was to return and be given up.

The whole number of prisoners, exclusive of seamen, was somewhat over seven thousand men; and the British loss during the siege was between five and six hundred. The combined army employed in the siege consisted of about seven thousand American regular troops, upwards of five thousand French, and four thousand militia. The loss in killed and wounded was about three hundred. The land forces surrendered to General Washington, and became prisoners to Congress; but the seamen, ships, and naval equipments, were assigned to the French admiral.

The success was more complete, and more speedily attained, than had been anticipated. The capture of Cornwallis, with so large a part of the British army in America, occasioned great rejoicings throughout the country, as affording a decisive presage of the favorable termination of the war. Congress passed a special vote of thanks to each of the commanders, and to the officers and troops. Two stands of colors, taken from the enemy at the capitulation, were given to General Washington, and two pieces of field-ordnance to Count de Rochambeau and Count de Grasse respectively, as tokens of the national gratitude for

their services. Congress moreover resolved to commemorate so glorious an event by causing a marble column to be erected at Yorktown, adorned with emblems of the alliance between France and the United States, and an inscription containing a narrative of the principal incidents of the siege and surrender.

General Washington, believing a most favorable opportunity now presented itself for following up this success by an expedition against Charleston, wrote a letter to Count de Grasse the day after the capitulation, requesting him to join in it with his fleet. He also went on board the admiral's ship, as well to pay his respects and offer his thanks for what had already been done, as to explain and enforce the practicability and importance of this plan. By the instructions from his court, and by his engagements to the Spaniards, Count de Grasse was bound to return to the West Indies without delay, and thus it was not in his power to accede to the proposal. It was then suggested, that he should transport a body of troops to Wilmington, in North Carolina, and land them there while on his voyage. To this he at first made no objection; but, when he ascertained that there would be a difficulty in landing the men without running the risk of dividing his fleet, or perhaps of being driven off the coast with the troops on board, he declined the undertaking. Lafayette was to command this expedition; and the purpose of it was to take a British post at Wilmington, and then march into the interior and unite with the southern army under General Greene.

The troops commanded by the Marquis de St. Simon were embarked, and Count de Grasse set sail for the West Indies. Before his departure, General Washington presented him with two beautiful horses, as a testimony of personal consideration and esteem.

As nothing further could be effected by the allied forces during the campaign, a detachment of two thousand men, comprising the Continental troops from Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia, was put under General St. Clair, with orders to reinforce General Greene at the south. The troops belonging eastward of Pennsylvania were transported by water to the Head of Elk, whence they marched to their winter cantonments in New Jersey and near Hudson's River. The French army remained in Virginia till the following summer, the head-quarters of Count de Rochambeau being at Williamsburg.

The prisoners were marched to Winchester in Virginia, and Fredericktown in Maryland;

and a part of them subsequently to Lancaster in Pennsylvania. Lord Cornwallis, and the other principal officers, went by sea to New York on parole.

All these affairs being arranged, General Washington left Yorktown on the 5th of November. The same day he arrived at Eltham, where he was present at the death of Mr. Custis, the only son of Mrs. Washington. He stayed there a few days to mingle his grief with that of the afflicted widow and mother. The occasion was not less trying to his sympathy than to his sensibility, for he had watched over the childhood and youth of the deceased with a paternal solicitude, and afterwards associated with him as a companion, who possessed his confidence and esteem. Mr. Custis was a member of the Virginia legislature, and much respected for his public and private character. He died at the age of twenty-eight, leaving four infant children, the two youngest of whom, a son and daughter, were adopted by General Washington, and they resided in his family till the end of his life

From Eltham he proceeded by the way of Mount Vernon to Philadelphia, receiving and answering various public addresses while on his journey. The day after his arrival he attended Congress, being introduced into the hall by two members, and greeted with a congratulatory address by the President. He was requested to remain for some time in Philadelphia, both that he might enjoy a respite from the fatigues of war, and that Congress might avail themselves of his aid, in making preparations for vigorous and timely efforts to draw every advantage from the recent triumph of the allied arms.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Preparations for another Campaign recommended and enforced by General Washington and approved by Congress. — Lafayette returns to France. — The Affair of Captain Asgill. — Backwardness of the States in recruiting the Army. — Proposal to General Washington to assume Supreme Power, and his Reply. — Sir Guy Carleton gives Notice, that Negotiations for Peace had begun. — The French Troops march from Virginia, join General Washington, and afterwards embark at Boston.

From the state of affairs at this time, both in Europe and America, it was evident that the war could not be of much longer duration. Considering, however, the temper hitherto manifested by the British cabinet, and the spirit with which a large majority of the nation had sustained the ministerial measures, it was generally supposed that another campaign would be tried. This was Washington's belief: and, in his communications to Congress and to persons of influence in various parts of the country, he urged the importance of being fully prepared. This he regarded as the wisest policy in any event. If the war continued, the preparations would be necessary; if it ceased, they would have a favorable effect on the negotiations for peace.

He was apprehensive, that the people, from

a mistaken idea of the magnitude of the late success in Virginia, would deceive themselves with delusive hopes, and grow remiss in their "To prevent so great an evil," said he, "shall be my study and endeavor; and I cannot but flatter myself, that the States, rather than relax in their exertions, will be stimulated to the most vigorous preparations for another active, glorious, and decisive campaign, which, if properly prosecuted, will, I trust, under the smiles of Heaven, lead us to the end of this long and tedious war, and set us down in the full security of the great object of our toils, the establishment of peace, liberty, and independence. Whatever may be the policy of European courts during this winter, their negotiations will prove too precarious a dependence for us to trust to. Our wisdom should dictate a serious preparation for war, and, in that state, we shall find ourselves in a situation secure against every event."

These sentiments met the full concurrence of Congress. They resolved to keep up the same military establishment as the year before; and to call on the States to complete their quotas of troops at an early day. They voted new requisitions of money and supplies. These resolves were adopted with a promptness, zeal, and unanimity, which had rarely been shown

on former occasions. To aid in carrying them into effect, it was deemed advisable for the Commander-in-chief to write two circular letters to the governors of all the States. The first, relating to finance, was dated on the 22d of January, 1782, and contained arguments for raising money adequate to the public exigencies, particularly the payment and clothing of the troops. The second, dated a week later, exhibited the numbers and condition of the army then in the field, and urged the completing of the quotas according to the requisition of Congress.

Other methods were also used to provide means for prosecuting the war. Succors continued to be received from France, and, by the persevering application of Franklin to the French court, a loan of six millions of livres, payable in monthly instalments, was promised for the coming year. After the capitulation at Yorktown, there being no prospect of further active service till the next campaign, the Marquis de Lafayette obtained permission from Congress to return on a visit to his native country. Besides passing resolves complimentary to his character, zeal, and military conduct, Congress made him the bearer of a letter to the King of France, in which he was commended to the notice of his sovereign in very

warm terms. Much reliance was placed on the representations he would make concerning the state of affairs in America, and on his influence to procure the desired assistance from the French government. The ministers from the United States in Europe were likewise instructed to confer with the Marquis de Lafayette, and avail themselves of his knowledge and counsels.

About the middle of April, General Washington left Philadelphia and joined the army, establishing his head-quarters at Newburg. He had hardly arrived in camp, when he heard of an occurrence, which produced much excitement at the time, and led to consequences of considerable notoriety, though in themselves of little moment. The particulars are these. Captain Huddy, an American officer, who commanded a small body of troops in Monmouth County, New Jersey, was taken prisoner by a party of refugees, conveyed into New York, and put in close confinement. A few days afterwards he was sent out of the city, under the charge of Captain Lippencot, at the head of a number of refugees, by whom he was hanged on the heights near Middletown. This wanton act exasperated the people in the neighborhood, who knew and esteemed Captain Huddy. Affidavits and a statement of facts were forwarded to General Washington. These he laid before a council of officers, who gave it as their unanimous opinion, that the case demanded retaliation, that the punishment ought to be inflicted on the leader of the party by which the murder was committed, and that, if he should not be given up, an officer equal in rank to Captain Huddy ought to be selected by lot from the British prisoners.

A representation of the facts was accordingly sent to Sir Henry Clinton, with a demand for the surrender of Lippencot. This demand not being complied with, an officer was designated for retaliation. The lot fell upon Captain Asgill, a young man only nineteen years old, who was then a prisoner at Lancaster in Pennsylvania. The affair was in suspense for several months. Although Lippencot was not delivered up, yet Sir Henry Clinton, and his successor Sir Guy Carleton, not only disavowed the act as having been done without authority, but reprobated it with unmeasured severity. The subject was referred by them to a court-martial, and Lippencot was tried. From the developements it appeared, that the guilt of the transaction rested mainly with the Board of Associated Loyalists in New York, and that Lippencot acted in conformity with what he believed to be the orders of the board. Hence he was acquitted, as not properly answerable for the crime of the act.

When these circumstances were made known, the whole matter was laid before Congress. Considering the ground taken by the British commanders in disavowing and censuring the act, added to the irresponsible nature of Lippencot's conduct, General Washington inclined to release Captain Asgill, and was disappointed and dissatisfied at the delay of Congress in coming to a decision on the subject. Meanwhile the mother of Asgill, already borne down with family afflictions, which were increased by the impending fate of her son, wrote a pathetic letter of intercession to the French ministry. This was shown to the King and Queen; and it wrought so much on their feelings, that Count de Vergennes by their direction wrote to General Washington, soliciting the liberation of Asgill. Although this communication arrived after it had been determined not to insist on retaliation, yet it had the effect to hasten the proceedings of Congress, and by their order Captain Asgill was set at liberty.

Little progress was made by the States in filling up their quotas of troops. When General Washington arrived in camp, the whole number of effective men in the northern army

was somewhat short of ten thousand; nor was it much increased afterwards. In fact, after the capitulation at Yorktown, the conviction was nearly universal, that the war would not be pursued any further in the United States. The recruiting service consequently languished. Relieved from danger, and worn out with their long toils and sacrifices, the people were slow to perceive, that large preparations would be the means of procuring better terms of peace, and seemed contented with the present prospects. News arrived in the first part of May, which indicated an approaching change in the British cabinet, and symptoms of pacific measures. Fearful of the effect which this intelligence might produce, Washington took occasion to express his own sentiments without reserve in a circular letter, which he was just at that time despatching to the governors of the States.

"Upon the most mature deliberation I can bestow," he observed, "I am obliged to declare it as my candid opinion, that the measures of the enemy in all their views, so far as they respect America, are merely delusory (they having no serious intention to admit our independence upon its true principles), and are calculated to quiet the minds of their own people, and reconcile them to the continuance of the

war; while they are meant to amuse the country into a false idea of peace, to draw us off from our connexion with France, and to lull us into a state of security and inactivity, which having taken place, the ministry will be left to prosecute the war in other parts of the world with greater vigor and effect. Even if the nation and Parliament are really in earnest to obtain peace with America, it will undoubtedly be wisdom in us to meet them with great caution and circumspection, and by all means to keep our arms firm in our hands, and, instead of relaxing one iota in our exertions, rather to spring forward with redoubled vigor, that we may take the advantage of every favorable opportunity, until our wishes are fully obtained. No nation ever yet suffered in treaty by preparing, even in the moment of negotiation, most vigorously for the field."

The discontents of the officers and soldiers, respecting the arrearages of their pay, had for some time increased; and, there being now a prospect, that the army would ultimately be disbanded without an adequate provision by Congress for meeting the claims of the troops, these discontents manifested themselves in audible murmurs and complaints, which foreboded serious consequences. But a spirit still more to be dreaded was secretly at work. In

reflecting on the limited powers of Congress, and on the backwardness of the States to comply with the most essential requisitions, even in support of their own interests, many of the officers were led to look for the cause in the form of government, and to distrust the stability of republican institutions. So far were they carried by their fears and speculations, that they meditated the establishment of a new and more energetic system. A colonel in the army, of a highly respectable character, and somewhat advanced in life, was made the organ for communicating their sentiments to the Commander-in-chief. In a letter elaborately and skilfully written, after describing the gloomy state of affairs, the financial difficulties, and the innumerable embarrassments in which the country had been involved during the war, on account of its defective political organization, the writer adds;

"This must have shown to all, and to military men in particular, the weakness of republics, and the exertions the army have been able to make by being under a proper head. Therefore I little doubt, that, when the benefits of a mixed government are pointed out, and duly considered, such will be readily adopted. In this case it will, I believe, be uncontroverted, that the same abilities, which have led us

through difficulties, apparently insurmountable by human power, to victory and glory, those qualities, that have merited and obtained the universal esteem and veneration of an army, would be most likely to conduct and direct us in the smoother paths of peace. Some people have so connected the ideas of tyranny and monarchy, as to find it very difficult to separate them. It may therefore be requisite to give the head of such a constitution, as I propose, some title apparently more moderate; but, if all other things were once adjusted, I believe strong arguments might be produced for admitting the title of King, which I conceive would be attended with some material advantages."

To this communication, as unexpected as it was extraordinary in its contents, Washington replied as follows.

"Newburg, 22 May, 1782.

"SIR,

"With a mixture of great surprise and astonishment, I have read with attention the sentiments you have submitted to my perusal. Be assured, Sir, no occurrence in the course of the war has given me more painful sensations, than your information of there being such ideas existing in the army, as you have expressed, and I must view with abhorrence and reprehend

with severity. For the present, the communication of them will rest in my own bosom, unless some further agitation of the matter shall make a disclosure necessary.

"I am much at a loss to conceive what part of my conduct could have given encouragement to an address, which to me seems big with the greatest mischiefs, that can befall my country. If I am not deceived in the knowledge of myself, you could not have found a person to whom your schemes are more disagreeable. At the same time, in justice to my own feelings, I must add, that no man possesses a more sincere wish to see ample justice done to the army than I do; and, as far as my powers and influence, in a constitutional way, extend, they shall be employed to the utmost of my abilities to effect it, should there be any occasion. Let me conjure you, then, if you have any regard for your country, concern for yourself or posterity, or respect for me, to banish these thoughts from your mind, and never communicate, as from yourself or any one else, a sentiment of the like nature. I am, Sir, &c. "GEORGE WASHINGTON."

Such was the language of Washington, when, at the head of his army and at the height of his power and popularity, it was proposed to him to become a king. After this indignant reply and stern rebuke, it is not probable that any further advances were made to him on the subject.

Sir Guy Carleton arrived at New York early in May, and superseded Sir Henry Clinton as commander of the British armies in America. His first letter to Washington was pacific in its tone, and showed, that at least a temporary change had taken place in the sentiments of Parliament respecting the principles on which the war had been conducted, and the policy of continuing it. Nothing of a positive nature was communicated, however, till the beginning of August, when Sir Guy Carleton again wrote, that he was authorized to give notice, that negotiations for a general peace had commenced at Paris, and that the independence of the United States would be conceded as a preliminary step. From this time, therefore, preparations for war ceased, and no further acts of hostility were committed by either party. It not being certain, nevertheless, that the negotiations would actually result in peace, no part of the American army was dismissed, but the posture of defence was maintained with the same caution and vigilance as before.

The French troops had continued in Virginia since the capitulation at Yorktown. They

marched to Hudson's River, and formed a junction with the forces under Washington about the middle of September. The two armies had been encamped on the east side of the river near Verplanck's Point more than a month, when the French marched to Boston, where a fleet was ready to receive them, and sailed before the end of December, having been in the country two years and a half. The Baron de Viomenil commanded the troops when they went on board the fleet at Boston. The Count de Rochambeau, accompanied by the Marquis de Chastellux, sailed some days later from Baltimore.

General Washington had drawn the larger part of his army down the river to Verplanck's Point, more as a mark of courtesy to the allied troops in meeting them there, than for any military object; and, after their departure, he returned to his former encampment at Newburg, where head-quarters continued till the army was disbanded.

CHAPTER XXX.

Dissatisfaction of the Army. — The Officers send a Memorial to Congress. — The anonymous Addresses at Newburg. — Intelligence arrives, that a Treaty of Peace had been signed at Paris. — General Washington's Sentiments concerning the civil Government of the Union. — His Circular Letter to the States. — He makes a Tour to the North. — Repairs to Congress at the Request of that Body. — His Farewell Address to the Army. — The British evacuate New York. — Washington resigns his Commission, and retires to private Life at Mount Vernon.

THE winter being a season of inactivity, and the prospect of peace becoming every day less doubtful, the officers and soldiers had leisure to reflect on their situation, and to look forward to the condition awaiting them at the end of the war. When they compared their long services and sufferings with the sacrifices of those, who had been engaged only in the pursuits of private life, and with the rewards hitherto received, they felt that they had claims, as well on the gratitude and generosity, as on the justice, of their country. At the same time, various circumstances conspired to make them apprehensive, that these claims would neither be adequately met nor duly estimated. Congress had no funds; the States were extremely backward in applying the only remedy by an effectual system of taxation;

and the resource of foreign loans was nearly exhausted. It was natural, that this state of things, added to long arrearages of pay, and accounts unsettled and without any security for a future liquidation of them, should cause much excitement and concern.

In the month of December, the officers in camp determined to address Congress on the subject of their grievances. A memorial was accordingly drawn up, which was understood to express the sentiments of the army. It contained a representation of the money actually due to them, a proposal that the half-pay for life should be commuted for a specific sum, and a request that security should be given by the government for fulfilling its engagements. The commutation it was believed would be more generally acceptable to the public than half-pay for life, which had always been opposed by a strong party, as favoring the idea of a pension list and a privileged class, and as hostile to republican institutions. Three officers were deputed as a committee to carry this memorial to Congress, and instructed to use their endeavors to obtain for it a successful hearing.

The dissensions, which had long existed in Congress, were brought to bear on this subject. Many of the members were disposed to do

ample justice to the army, and to all other public creditors, by assuming their claims as a Continental charge, and providing for the settlement of them by a Continental fund and securities; while others, jealous of State rights and State sovereignty, disapproved this course, and urged the plan of referring unsettled accounts to the respective States. Congress took the memorial into consideration, and passed resolves indefinite in their character. and not such as were likely to answer the expectations or quiet the uneasiness of the army. The claims of public creditors were recognised, but no scheme was suggested for establishing funds, or giving security. On an estimate of the average ages of the officers, it was decided, that half-pay for life was equivalent to five years' whole pay; but the requisite number of nine States could not be obtained in favor of the commutation. Apprehending a defeat, if they pressed the subject, and hoping that the vote would ultimately be carried, the committee thought it prudent to delay further proceedings, and one of them returned to camp with a letter containing a report of what had been done.

The representations thus communicated were by no means satisfactory to the officers. Disappointed and irritated, many of them were for resorting to measures, which should convince Congress, not only of the justice of their demands, but of their resolution to enforce them. Hence originated the famous Newburg Addresses. At a private consultation of several officers it was agreed, that a meeting of the general and field officers, a commissioned officer from each company, and a delegate from the medical staff, ought to be called for the purpose of passing a series of resolutions, which should be forwarded to their committee at Congress. On the 10th of March a notification to this effect was circulated in camp, fixing the time and stating the object. The same day an anonymous address to the army was sent out, written in a strain of passionate and stirring eloquence, and extremely well suited to excite the feelings and rouse the spirit of those for whom it was intended. Foreseeing the fatal consequences that might result from an assembling of the officers under such circumstances, and at the same time deeply impressed with the justice of their complaints and the reality of their wrongs, Washington had a delicate task to perform; but he executed it with his characteristic decision, firmness, and wisdom. He sought rather to guide and control the proceedings

thus begun, than to check or discountenance them by any act of severity.

In general orders the next morning, after censuring the anonymous paper and invitation as irregular and disorderly, he appointed a day and hour for the meeting of the officers, when they might "devise what further measures ought to be adopted, as most rational, and best calculated to attain the object in view." This was followed by another anonymous address, in a tone more subdued than the former, but expressing similar sentiments, and representing the orders as favorable to the purpose desired, the time of meeting only being changed. The Commander-in-chief, however, took care to frustrate the design of this interpretation by conversing individually with those officers in whom he had the greatest confidence, setting before them in a strong light the danger that would attend a rash or precipitate act in such a crisis, inculcating moderation, and using his utmost efforts to appease their discontents, and persuade them to deliberate without passion, and under a deep conviction that the vital interests of their country were involved in the measures they should adopt.

When the officers were assembled at the time appointed, General Washington addressed them in very impressive terms, reminding them

of the cause for which they had taken up arms, the fidelity and constancy with which they had hitherto devoted themselves to that cause, and the sacred trust which was still reposed in them as the defenders of their country's liberty; appealing to the honor and patriotism, by which they had so nobly and generously shown themselves to be actuated in the perils of the field, and amidst the unexampled sufferings of a protracted war; and imploring them not to cast a shade over the glory they had acquired, nor tarnish their wellearned reputation, nor lessen their dignity, by an intemperate or indiscreet act at the moment when the great object of their toils was achieved, and the world was loud in its praise of their valor, fortitude, and success. He acknowledged the equity of their claims, and the reasonableness of their complaints; but he deprecated the idea, that on this account they should distrust the plighted faith of their country, or the intentions of Congress; expressing his firm belief, that, before they should be disbanded, every thing would be adjusted to their satisfaction; and pledging himself, from a sense of gratitude for their past services, and from the attachment he felt to an army, which had adhered to him in every vicissitude of fortune, to employ all his abilities

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and his best exertions to procure for them complete justice, as far as it could be done consistently with the great duty he owed to his country, and to the authority which every citizen was bound to respect.

After speaking these sentiments, and others of a similar tendency, suited to soothe their feelings and inspire confidence, he retired from the assembly. The deliberation of the officers was short, and their decision prompt and unanimous. They passed resolutions, thanking the Commander-in-chief for the course he had pursued, and expressive of their unabated attachment; and also declaring their unshaken reliance on the good faith of Congress and their country, and a determination to bear with patience their grievances till in due time they should be redressed. A full account of the transactions was transmitted to Congress and published in their journals.

The incidents are clearly and briefly related by General Washington in a letter to Governor Harrison of Virginia, written immediately after their occurrence.

"You have not been unacquainted, I dare say, with the fears, the hopes, the apprehensions, and the expectations of the army, relative to the provision which is to be made for them hereafter. Although a firm reliance on

the integrity of Congress, and a belief that the public would finally do justice to all its servants and give an indisputable security for the payment of the half-pay of the officers, had kept them amidst a variety of sufferings tolerably quiet and contented for two or three years past; yet the total want of pay, the little prospect of receiving any from the unpromising state of the public finances, and the absolute aversion of the States to establish any Continental funds for the payment of the debt due to the army, did at the close of the last campaign excite greater discontents, and threaten more serious and alarming consequences, than it is easy for me to describe or you to conceive. Happily for us, the officers of highest rank and greatest consideration interposed; and it was determined to address Congress in an humble, pathetic, and explicit manner.

"While the sovereign power appeared perfectly well disposed to do justice, it was discovered that the States would enable them to do nothing; and, in this state of affairs, and after some time spent on the business in Philadelphia, a report was made by the delegates of the army, giving a detail of the proceedings. Before this could be fully communicated to the troops, while the minds of all were in a

peculiar state of inquietude and irritation, an anonymous writer, though he did not step forth and give his name boldly to the world, sent into circulation an address to the officers of the army, which, in point of composition, in elegance and force of expression, has rarely been equalled in the English language, and in which the dreadful alternative was proposed, of relinquishing the service in a body if the war continued, or retaining their arms in case of peace, until Congress should comply with all their demands. At the same time, and at the moment when their minds were inflamed by the most pathetic representations, a general meeting of the officers was summoned by another anonymous production.

"It is impossible to say what would have been the consequences, had the author succeeded in his first plans. But measures having been taken to postpone the meeting, so as to give time for cool reflection and counteraction, the good sense of the officers has terminated this affair in a manner, which reflects the greatest glory on themselves, and demands the highest expressions of gratitude from their country."

Thus, by the prudent measures of the Commander-in-chief, the excitement was allayed, and tranquillity was restored to the army. Nor

did he delay to fulfil the pledge he had made, writing to Congress with an earnestness and force of argument, which showed him to be moved not less by his feelings, than by a sense of duty, in asserting the rights and just claims of those, who, to use his own words, "had so long, so patiently, and so cheerfully suffered and fought under his direction," and urging a speedy decision in their favor. His representations and appeals were not disregarded. The subject was again considered in Congress, and the requisite number of States voted for the commutation of half-pay, and for the other provisions solicited by the officers in their memorial.*

In a few days the joyful news arrived, that a preliminary treaty of peace had been signed at Paris. The intelligence was brought in a French vessel from Cadiz, with a letter from the Marquis de Lafayette, who was then at that place preparing for an expedition to the West Indies under Count d'Estaing. Shortly

^{*} The anonymous addresses were from the pen of Major John Armstrong, at that time an aid-de-camp to General Gates. They were written at the request of several officers, who believed that the tardy proceedings of Congress, and the reluctance of that body to recognise the claims of the public creditors, called for a more decided expression of the sentiments of the army.

afterwards Sir Guy Carleton communicated the same, as from official authority, and announced a cessation of hostilities. A proclamation to this effect was made to the American army on the 19th of April, precisely eight years from the day on which the first blood was shed in this memorable contest at Lexington.

Although the military labors of General Washington were now drawing to a close, in the attainment of the great object to which he had devoted himself with an ardor, constancy, endurance, and singleness of purpose, that had never been surpassed by any commander, yet his anxiety for the future was scarcely diminished. The love of liberty, which had prompted him to such trials and disinterested exertions in the cause of his country, was equally alive to the success of that cause in building up the fabric of freedom on a firm and durable basis.

The preparation of a plan for a peace establishment, which had been solicited by Congress, and some preliminary arrangements with the British commander in regard to the evacuation of New York, occupied him several weeks. For these latter objects he had a personal conference with Sir Guy Carleton at Orangetown.

The circular letter, which he wrote to the

governors of the States, as his last official communication, and which was designed to be laid ation to before the several legislatures, is remarkable for its ability, the deep interest it manifests for the officers and soldiers, who had fought the battles of their country, the soundness of its principles, and the wisdom of its counsels. Four great points he aims to enforce as essential in guiding the deliberations of every public body, and as claiming the serious attention of every citizen, namely, an indissoluble union of the States; a sacred regard to public juser. vet tice; the adoption of a proper military peace establishment; and a pacific and friendly disposition among the people of the States, which should induce them to forget local prejudices, and incline them to mutual concessions for the advantage of the community. These he calls the pillars by which alone independence and national character can be supported. On each of these topics he remarks at considerable length, with a felicity of style and cogency of reasoning in all respects worthy of the subject.

> most salutary. Many of the troops went home on furlough;

> No public address could have been better adapted to the state of the times; and coming

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and General Washington, having little to do in camp till the arrival of the definitive treaty, resolved to employ the interval in making a tour to the northward, for the double purpose of gratifying his curiosity in visiting the scenes of the late military operations in that quarter, and of ascertaining from observation the natural resources of the country. In company with Governor Clinton he ascended the Hudson to Albany, and proceeded thence over the battlefields of Saratoga, as far as Ticonderoga and Crown Point. Turning then to the Mohawk River, he extended his journey westward to Fort Schuyler. He was absent from Newburg nineteen days. Ever regarding the condition and affairs of his country on a comprehensive scale, and fixing his thoughts on its importance as a nation, he saw, while on this tour, the immense advantages that would result from a water communication between the Hudson and the great lakes, and believed in its practicabil-His hopes and his anticipations have since been realized in the magnificent work, opening a passage for boats by a canal from the Hudson to Lake Erie, and effected by the enterprise and wealth of the State of New York.

When he returned to Newburg, he found a letter from the President of Congress, asking

his attendance on that assembly, then in session at Princeton. The object of this request was, to consult him on the arrangements for peace, and other public concerns. While he was making preparations to leave camp, Congress conferred on him new honors. It was voted unanimously, that an equestrian statue of General Washington should be erected at the place where the residence of Congress should be established, and that it should be executed by the best artist in Europe, under the superintendence of the Minister of the United States at the Court of Versailles.

Leaving the army under the immediate command of General Knox, the officers higher in rank having gone home by permission, Washington obeyed the summons of Congress, and went to Princeton, where he was introduced into the assembly while in session by two of the members appointed for the purpose. He was then addressed by the President, who congratulated him on the success of the war, in which he had acted so conspicuous and important a part. "In other nations," said the President, "many have performed eminent services, for which they have deserved the thanks of the public. But to you, Sir, peculiar praise is due. Your services have been essential in acquiring and establishing the freedom and independence of your country. They deserve the grateful acknowledgments of a free and independent nation." To this address Washington replied in the presence of Congress, and then retired. A house was provided for him at Rocky Hill, three or four miles from Princeton, where he resided, holding conferences from time to time with committees and members of Congress, and giving counsel on such subjects as were referred to his consideration.

A large part of the officers and soldiers had been permitted during the summer to retire from the army on furlough, and Congress issued a proclamation, on the 18th of October, discharging them from further service, and all others who had been engaged to serve during the war. The army was thus in effect disbanded. A small force only was retained, consisting of such troops as had been enlisted for a definite time, till the peace establishment should be organized.

This proclamation was followed by General Washington's farewell address to the army, a performance not less admirable in its principles and its objects, than his circular letter to the States. To his cordial and affectionate thanks for the devotedness of the officers and soldiers to him through the war, and for the manner in which they had discharged their duty, he adds

seasonable advice as to their conduct in resuming the character of private citizens, and in contributing to the support of civil govern-"Let it be known and remembered," said he, "that the reputation of the federal armies is established beyond the reach of malevolence; and let a consciousness of their achievements and fame still incite the men, who composed them, to honorable actions; under the persuasion, that the private virtues of economy, prudence, and industry, will not be less amiable in civil life, than the more splendid qualities of valor, perseverance, and enterprise were in the field. Every one may rest assured, that much, very much, of the future happiness of the officers and men will depend upon the wise and manly conduct, which shall be adopted by them when they are mingled with the great body of the community. And, although the General has so frequently given it as his opinion in the most public and explicit manner, that, unless the principles of the Federal Government were properly supported, and the powers of the Union increased, the honor, dignity, and justice of the nation would be lost for ever; yet he cannot help repeating, on this occasion, so interesting a sentiment, and leaving it as his last injunction to every officer and every soldier, who may view

the subject in the same serious point o light, to add his best endeavors to those of his worthy fellow citizens towards effecting these great and valuable purposes, on which our very existence as a nation so materially depends."

At length Sir Guy Carleton received orders from the ministry to evacuate New York, and gave notice to General Washington that he should soon be ready for that event. Delay had been occasioned by the want of transports in sufficient numbers to send to Nova Scotia the refugees, who had sought protection in New York during the war, and the large amount of goods, stores, and military supplies, which had accumulated in that city. Many of these persons would gladly have remained in the country, having property which they desired to recover, and relatives and friends whom they were reluctant to abandon; but they were exiled by the laws of the States, and could not be admitted to the privileges of a residence till these laws were repealed.

Washington repaired to West Point, to which place General Knox had drawn the troops, that still remained in the service. Arrangements were made with Governor Clinton, the chief magistrate of the State of New York, by which the city was to be delivered

into his charge. A detachment of troops marched from West Point to Haerlem, and was joined there by General Washington and Governor Clinton. In the morning of the 25th of November, they advanced to the upper part of the city, where they continued till one o'clock, when the British parties retired from the posts in that quarter, and were followed by the American infantry and artillery, preceded by a corps of dragoons. Meantime the British troops embarked. Possession being thus taken of the city, the military officers, and the civil officers of the State, made a public entry. The General and Governor rode at the head of the procession on horseback. Then came in regular succession the lieutenant-governor and members of the council, General Knox and the officers of the army, the speaker of the Assembly and citizens. They were escorted by a body of Westchester light-horse, as a compliment to the Governor and civil authority; the Continental military jurisdiction being supposed to have ceased, or at least to have been suspended in deference to the civil power of the State. Governor Clinton gave a public entertainment, with which the transactions of the day were closed. Perfect order and quiet prevailed from the beginning to the end, and no untoward incident occurred to mar

the interest of an occasion, which had been so long wished for, and was so joyfully welcomed.

A trial of feeling now awaited the Commander-in-chief, which for the moment was more severe and painful, than any he had been called to bear. The time had arrived, when he was to bid a final adieu to his companions in arms, to many of whom he was bound by the strongest ties of friendship, and for all of whom he felt a lively gratitude and sincere regard. "This affecting interview took place on the 4th of December. At noon, the principal officers of the army assembled at Frances's tavern, soon after which their beloved commander entered the room. His emotions were too strong to be concealed. Filling a glass, he turned to them and said, 'With a heart full of love and gratitude, I now take leave of you; I most devoutly wish, that your latter days may be as prosperous and happy, as your former ones have been glorious and honorable.' Having drunk, he added, 'I cannot come to each of you to take my leave, but shall be obliged if each of you will come and take me by the hand.' General Knox, being nearest, turned to him. Washington, incapable of utterance, grasped his hand, and embraced him. In the same affectionate manner he took leave

of each succeeding officer. The tear of manly sensibility was in every eye; and not a word was articulated to interrupt the dignified silence and the tenderness of the scene. Leaving the room, he passed through the corps of light infantry, and walked to White Hall, where a barge waited to convey him to Paulus Hook. The whole company followed in mute and solemn procession, with dejected countenances, testifying feelings of delicious melancholy, which no language can describe. Having entered the barge, he turned to the company, and, waving his hat, bid them a silent They paid him the same affectionate compliment; and, after the barge had left them, returned in the same solemn manner to the place where they had assembled."*

Congress had adjourned from Princeton to Annapolis in Maryland. Washington travelled slowly to that place, greeted everywhere on the road by the acclamations of his fellow citizens, and the most gratifying tokens of their love and respect. As he passed along, public addresses were presented to him by the legislatures of New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Maryland, the Philosophical Society and the University in Philadelphia, citizens of towns in their

^{*} Marshall's Life of Washington, 2d ed., Vol. II. p. 57.

corporate capacity, religious societies, and various incorporated associations. Arrived at the seat of Congress, he informed the President, that he was ready to resign the commission, with which he had been honored in the service of his country. This ceremony was performed in the Hall of Congress on the 23d of December, all the members and a large concourse of spectators being present. At the close of his address on this occasion, he said; "Having now finished the work assigned me, I retire from the great theatre of action; and, bidding an affectionate farewell to this august body, under whose orders I have so long acted, I here offer my commission, and take my leave of all the employments of public life." He then advanced and gave his commission into the hands of the President, who replied to his address. The ceremony being ended, he withdrew from the assembly, divested of his official character, and sustaining no other rank than that of a private citizen.

The next morning he left Annapolis, and reached Mount Vernon the same day, having been absent in the command of the army somewhat more than eight years and a half, during which period he had never been at his own house except accidentally while on his way with Count de Rochambeau to Yorktown, and in returning from that expedition.

CHAPTER XXXI.

He declines receiving pecuniary Compensation for his public Services. — His Feelings on being relieved from the Burden of Office. — Devotes himself to Agriculture. — Makes a Tour to the Western Country. — His extensive Plans for internal Navigation. — These Plans adopted by the State of Virginia. — Visit of the Marquis de Lafayette to America. — Washington refuses to accept a Donation from the State of Virginia. — His liberal Acts for the Encouragement of Education. — Approves the Countess of Huntington's Scheme for civilizing and Christianizing the Indians.

GENERAL WASHINGTON believed his career as a public man to be now at an end. He seems indeed to have formed a resolution never again to leave his retirement, unless called out by some great exigency in the affairs of his country, which at that time he neither foresaw nor expected. However much he might have been gratified with the honors bestowed upon him by his countrymen, with the success of his long and unwearied services, and the applause of the whole civilized world, it was nevertheless with a heartfelt delight which none of these could give, that he returned to the quiet scenes and congenial employments of private life. For we may here repeat what has been said in a former part of this narrative, that no occupations interested him so much,

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or engaged his thoughts so constantly, as those of the practical agriculturist. He was fond of adorning and improving his grounds as an amusement, and was devoted to the cultivation of his farms, upon a thorough, economical, and systematic plan, both as a means of increasing his property, and as being suited to his tastes and early habits.

His first care, after establishing himself at Mount Vernon, was to examine minutely into the state of his private affairs, which had become deranged by his long absence and the disorders of the 'times. His fortune was ample for a republican citizen, and a man who derived neither consequence nor pleasure from display, but it had necessarily suffered a diminution during the war. Adhering rigidly to the resolution he had formed, when he accepted the command of the army, not to receive any remuneration from the public, either in the shape of pay or other pecuniary reward, he now considered it a duty to repair the losses he had sustained, as well by economy in his style of living, as by all the usual efforts to increase the productiveness of his estates.

Some of his countrymen, estimating his services to the public at their just value, and knowing the injury his private affairs had suffered in consequence of them, hoped to change

his purpose of refusing pecuniary compensation. A few days before he resigned his commission, the Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania sent the following instructions on this subject to the delegates in Congress from that State.

"Though his Excellency General Washington proposes in a short time to retire, yet his illustrious actions and virtues render his character so splendid and venerable, that it is highly probable the admiration and esteem of the world may make his life in a very considerable degree public, as numbers will be desirous of seeing the great and good man, who has so eminently contributed to the happiness of a nation. His very services to his country may therefore subject him to expenses, unless he permits her gratitude to interpose.

"We are perfectly acquainted with the disinterestedness and generosity of his soul. He thinks himself amply rewarded for all his labors and cares, by the love and prosperity of his fellow citizens. It is true, no rewards they can bestow can be equal to his merits. But they ought not to suffer those merits to be burdensome to him. We are convinced that the people of Pennsylvania would regret such a consequence.

"We are aware of the delicacy, with which

this subject must be treated. But, relying upon the good sense of Congress, we wish it may engage their early attention."

These instructions were received by the delegates, and a copy was forwarded to General Washington after he had arrived at Mount Vernon. It was not thought advisable to lay them before Congress, or take any steps in fulfilling them, without his previous knowledge and approbation. In this case, as in every other, he acted consistently with his character. He promptly declined the intended favor. All proceedings on the subject were accordingly stopped. There can be no doubt, that the sentiments of the Executive Council of Pennsylvania would have been responded to by the whole nation, and that a liberal grant from Congress would everywhere have met with a cordial assent.

The feelings of Washington, on being relieved from the solicitude and burdens of office, were forcibly expressed in letters to his friends. "At length," said he, in writing to Lafayette, "I am become a private citizen, on the banks of the Potomac; and, under the shadow of my own vine and my own figtree, free from the bustle of a camp, and the busy scenes of public life, I am solacing myself with those tranquil enjoyments, of which the soldier, who

is ever in pursuit of fame, the statesman, whose watchful days and sleepless nights are spent in devising schemes to promote the welfare of his own, perhaps the ruin of other countries, as if this globe was insufficient for us all, and the courtier, who is always watching the countenance of his prince, in hopes of catching a gracious smile, can have very little conception. I have not only retired from all public employments, but I am retiring within myself, and shall be able to view the solitary walk, and tread the paths of private life, with a heartfelt satisfaction. Envious of none, I am determined to be pleased with all; and this, my dear friend, being the order for my march, I will move gently down the stream of life, until I sleep with my fathers."

To General Knox he wrote; "I am just beginning to experience that ease and freedom from public cares, which, however desirable, takes some time to realize; for, strange as it may seem, it is nevertheless true, that it was not till lately I could get the better of my usual custom of ruminating, as soon as I waked in the morning, on the business of the ensuing day; and of my surprise at finding, after revolving many things in my mind, that I was no longer a public man, nor had any thing to do with public transactions. I feel now, how-

ever, as I conceive a wearied traveller must do, who, after treading many a painful step with a heavy burden on his shoulders, is eased of the latter, having reached the haven to which all the former were directed, and from his house-top is looking back, and tracing with an eager eye the meanders by which he escaped the quicksands and mires which lay in his way; and into which none but the all-powerful Guide and Dispenser of human events could have prevented his falling."

The time and thoughts of Washington were now confined to his farms, and to such acts of hospitality as were demanded by the numerous visits from strangers and his acquaintances, who were drawn to Mount Vernon by motives of curiosity, admiration, and respect. However onerous these visits might be, on some occasions, his house was open to all that came, and his personal civilities were so rendered as to strengthen the affections of his friends, and win the esteem of those, who had known him only by his fame, and revered him for his public character. And it is but just to say, that in all these duties Mrs. Washington performed her part with such discretion, assiduity, and courtesy, without ostentation on the one hand or constraint on the other, as, at the same time that it proved the goodness of her

heart and her power to please, insured the comfort and enjoyment of her guests, and convinced them of the domestic harmony and happiness, that reigned in the mansion at Mount Vernon.

In the month of September, 1784, Washington made a tour to the Western country, for the purpose of inspecting the lands he owned beyond the Allegany Mountains, and also of ascertaining the practicability of opening a communication between the head waters of the rivers running eastward into the Atlantic, and those that flow westward to the Ohio. The extent of this journey was six hundred and eighty miles, the whole of which he travelled on horseback, using pack-horses for the conveyance of a tent, the necessary baggage, and such supplies as could not be procured in the wild and unsettled regions through which he was to pass. He crossed the mountains by the usual route of Braddock's Road, and spent several days in surveying and inspecting his lands on the Monongahela River, a part of which was occupied by settlers. His first intention was to descend the Ohio, as he had done in the year 1770, to the Great Kenhawa, where he owned a large tract of wild land; but the hostile temper of the Indians rendering this expedition hazardous, and the motive not being strong enough to induce him to run risks, he advanced westward no further than the Monongahela. Returning by a circuitous route, he passed through the heart of the wilderness, first ascending the Monongahela River, and thence traversing the country far to the south between the ridges of the Allegany Mountains, with the special view of deciding the question in his own mind, whether the Potomac and James Rivers could be connected by internal navigation with the western waters. He conversed on the subject with every intelligent person he met, and kept a journal in which he recorded the results of his observations and inquiries.

His thoughts had been turned to this enterprise before the Revolution; and, since the peace, he had used unwearied diligence by an extensive correspondence to procure facts respecting the rivers falling into the Ohio from the west, and into the great Lakes, and also the distances from various navigable points in those rivers and lakes to the head waters of the streams flowing towards the Atlantic. Soon after returning from his western tour, he communicated to the governor of Virginia the fruits of his investigations in a letter, one of the ablest, most sagacious, and most important productions of his pen. Presenting first a clear state of the question, and showing the

practicability of facilitating the intercourse of trade between the east and the west by improving and extending the water communications, he then proceeds by a train of unanswerable argument and illustration to explain the immense advantages, that would arise from such a measure, in strengthening the union of the States, multiplying the resources of trade, and promoting the prosperity of the country.

At this time the State of Virginia, being large and powerful, stretching on one side to the Atlantic ocean and on the other to the western waters, and having in its bosom two noble rivers descending from the summits of the Alleganies, he thought the most favorably situated for beginning the great work. He recommended, therefore, as a preliminary step, that commissioners should be appointed to survey the Potomac and James Rivers from tidewater to their sources, and the portages between them and the principal western streams, following these streams to their junction with the Ohio, measuring with accuracy the distances, noting the obstructions to be removed, and estimating the probable expense. He also advised a similar survey of the rivers west of the Ohio, as far as Detroit. "These things being done," said he, "I shall be mistaken if prejudice does not yield to facts, jealousy to candor,

and finally, if reason and nature, thus aided, do not dictate what is right and proper to be done." The governor laid this letter before the legislature. It was the first suggestion of the great system of internal improvements, which has since been pursued in the United States.

A short time before his journey to the west, Washington had the satisfaction of receiving at Mount Vernon the Marquis de Lafayette, for whom he cherished the warmest friendship, heightened by gratitude for the disinterestedness and ardor with which he had espoused the cause of American freedom, and the signal services he had rendered. Two or three months were passed by Lafavette in the middle and eastern States, and in November he arrived at Richmond in Virginia. Washington met him at that place, where they were both received with public honors by the legislature then in session. They returned together to Mount Vernon; and, when Lafayette's visit was concluded, Washington accompanied him on his way to Annapolis.

In a letter to Lafayette's wife he said; "We restore the Marquis to you in good health, crowned with wreaths of love and respect from every part of the Union." The parting of the two friends was affecting, and showed the

strength of the ties by which they were united. As soon as he reached home, Washington wrote to him as follows. "In the moment of our separation, upon the road as I travelled, and every hour since, I have felt all that love, respect, and attachment for you, with which length of years, close connexion, and your merits have inspired me. I often asked myself, as our carriages separated, whether that was the last sight I ever should have of you? And, though I wished to say No, my fears answered Yes. I called to mind the days of my youth, and found they had long since fled to return no more; that I was now descending the hill I had been fifty-two years climbing, and that, though I was blest with a good constitution, I was of a short-lived family, and might soon expect to be entombed in the mansion of my fathers. These thoughts darkened the shades, and gave a gloom to the picture, and consequently to my prospect of seeing you again." This melancholy presage was fulfilled. They never met afterwards. But their attachment remained indissoluble, and Washington lived to sympathize in the misfortunes of his friend, and to have the consolation of using all the means in his power to rescue him from the sufferings he so long endured in a cruel imprisonment.

The hopes of General Washington, in regard to his favorite scheme of internal navigation, were more than realized. The legislature of Virginia, after duly considering his letter to the governor, not only appointed the commission for surveys, but organized two companies, called the Potomac Company and the James River Company, for the purpose of carrying the plan into effect. They moreover complimented him without a dissenting voice, by a donation of fifty shares in the former company, and one hundred shares in the latter; the fifty shares being estimated at ten thousand dollars, and the others at five thousand pounds sterling. Aware of his delicacy on the subject of receiving money from the public, the legislature contrived to frame the preamble of the act in such language, as, it was hoped, would remove his scruples. "It is the desire of the representatives of this commonwealth to embrace every suitable occasion of testifying their sense of the unexampled merits of George Washington towards his country; and it is their wish in particular, that those great works for its improvement, which, both as springing from the liberty which he has been so instrumental in establishing, and as encouraged by his patronage, will be durable monuments of

his glory, may be made monuments also of the gratitude of his country."

If he was highly gratified, as he must have been, with this public testimony of affection and respect, he was scarcely less embarrassed by it. Not that he hesitated, as to the course he should pursue, but the grant had been made in so liberal a manner, and from motives so pure, that he feared a refusal might be regarded in an unfavorable light, as evincing either ingratitude to his friends, or a disposition to gain applause by a show of disinterestedness, unusual if not unnecessary. He stated his difficulties freely in private letters to the governor, and to some of the principal members of the legislature; declaring, at the same time, that he could not, consistently with his principles, accept the proffered gift in such a way, that he should derive from it any emolument to himself. A positive decision was not required till the next session of the legislature, when he wrote officially to the governor declining the grant; but, lest the operations of the companies should be retarded by withdrawing the subscriptions for the shares, which had been made by the treasurer on his account, he suggested, that, if the Assembly should think proper to submit to him the appropriation of them for some object of a public nature, he

would accept the trust. His proposition was cheerfully acceded to; and, by an act of the Assembly, the shares were assigned to such public objects, as he should direct during his life, or by his last will and testament.

The purpose, which he first had in view, was the encouragement of education, and this purpose was ultimately accomplished. Some time before his death, he made over the shares in the James River Company to an institution in Rockbridge County, then called Liberty Hall Academy. The name has since been changed to Washington College. The fifty shares in the Potomac Company he bequeathed in perpetuity for the endowment of a university in the District of Columbia, under the auspices of the government; and, if such a seminary should not be established by the government, the fund was to increase till it should be adequate, with such other resources as might be obtained, for the accomplishment of the design. The establishing of a national university was always one of his favorite schemes. He recommended it in his messages to Congress, and often in his letters spoke of the advantages, which would be derived from it to the nation.

It may here be added, that he was a zealous advocate for schools and literary institutions

of every kind, and sought to promote them, whenever an opportunity offered, by his public addresses and by private benefactions. In this spirit he accepted the chancellorship of William and Mary College, being earnestly solicited by the trustees. In his answer to them, accepting the appointment, he said; "I rely fully in your strenuous endeavors for placing the system on such a basis, as will render it most beneficial to the State and the republic of letters, as well as to the more extensive interests of humanity and religion." The chancellor's duty consisted chiefly in suggesting and approving measures for the management of the college, and in recommending professors and teachers to fill vacancies in the departments of instruction.

The acts of charity by which he contributed from his private means to foster education were not few nor small. During many years, he gave fifty pounds annually for the instruction of indigent children in Alexandria; and by will he left a legacy of four thousand dollars, the net income of which was to be used for the same benevolent object for ever. Two or three instances are known, in which he offered to pay the expenses of young men through their collegiate course. When General Greene died, he proposed to take under

his protection one of the sons of his departed friend, pay the charges of his education, and bring him forward into life. Fortunately the circumstances, in which General Greene left his family, rendered this act of munificence and paternal care unnecessary. Other examples might be cited; and, from his cautious habit of concealing from the world his deeds of charity, it may be presumed many others are unknown, in which his heart and his hand were open to the relief of indigent merit.

The Countess of Huntington, celebrated for her religious enthusiasm and liberal charities, formed a scheme for civilizing and Christianizing the North American Indians. Being a daughter of the Earl of Ferrers, who was descended through the female line from a remote branch of the Washington family, she claimed relationship to General Washington, and wrote to him several letters respecting her project of benevolence and piety in America. It was her design to form, at her own charge, in the neighborhood of some of the Indian tribes, a settlement of industrious emigrants, who, by their example and habits, should gradually introduce among them the arts of civilization; and missionaries were to teach them the principles of Christianity. Lady Huntington proposed, that the government of the United

States should grant a tract of wild lands upon which her emigrants and missionaries should establish themselves. A scheme, prompted by motives so pure, and founded on so rational a basis, gained at once the approbation and countenance of Washington. He wrote to the President of Congress, and to the governors of some of the States, expressing favorable sentiments of Lady Huntington's application. Political and local reasons interfered to defeat the plan. In the first place, it was thought doubtful whether a colony of foreigners settled on the western frontier, near the English on one side and the Spaniards on the other, would in the end prove conducive to the public tranquillity. And, in the next place, the States individually had ceded all their wild lands to the Union, and Congress were not certain that they possessed power to grant any portion of the new territory for such an object. Hence the project was laid aside, although Washington offered to facilitate it as far as he could on a smaller scale, by allowing settlers to occupy his own lands, and be employed according to Lady Huntington's views.

CHAPTER XXXII.

His Operations in Farming and Horticulture. — Visiters at Mount Vernon. — His Habits. — Houdon's Statue. — Condition of the Country and Defects of the Confederacy. — Washington's Sentiments thereon. — First Steps towards effecting a Reform. — Convention at Annapolis.

In the spring of 1785, he was engaged for several weeks in planting his grounds at Mount Vernon with trees and shrubs. To this interesting branch of husbandry he had devoted considerable attention before the war, and during that period he had endeavored to carry out his plans of improvement. In some of his letters from camp, he gave minute directions to his manager for removing and planting trees; but want of skill and other causes prevented these directions from being complied with, except in a very imperfect manner. The first year after the war, he applied himself mainly to farming operations, with the view of restoring his neglected fields and commencing a regular system of practical agriculture. He gradually abandoned the cultivation of tobacco, which exhausted his lands, and substituted wheat and grass, as better suited to the soil, and in the aggregate more profitable.

He began a new method of rotation of crops, in which he studied the particular qualities of the soil in the different parts of his farms, causing wheat, maize, potatoes, oats, grass, and other crops to succeed each other in the same field at stated times. So exact was he in this method, that he drew out a scheme in which all his fields were numbered, and the crops assigned to them for several years in advance. It proved so successful, that he pursued it to the end of his life, with occasional slight deviations by way of experiment.

Having thus arranged and systematized his agricultural operations, he now set himself at work in earnest to execute his purpose of planting and adorning the grounds around the mansion-house. In the direction of the left wing, and at a considerable distance, was a vegetable garden; and on the right, at an equal distance, was another garden for ornamental shrubs, plants, and flowers. Between these gardens, in front of the house, was a spacious lawn, surrounded by serpentine walks. Beyond the gardens and lawn were the orchards. Very early in the spring he began with the lawn, selecting the choicest trees from the woods on his estates, and transferring them to the borders of the serpentine walks, arranging them in such a manner as to produce symmetry and beauty in the general effect, intermingling in just proportions forest trees, evergreens, and flowering shrubs. He attended personally to the selection, removal, and planting of every tree; and his Diary, which is very particular from day to day through the whole process, proves that he engaged in it with intense interest, and anxiously watched each tree and shoot till it showed signs of renewed growth. Such trees as were not found on his own lands, he obtained from other parts of the country, and at length his design was completed according to his wishes.

The orchards, gardens, and green-houses were next replenished with all the varieties of rare fruit-trees, vegetables, shrubs, and flowering plants, which he could procure. was less easily accomplished; but, horticulture being with him a favorite pursuit, he continued during his life to make new accessions of fruits and plants, both native and exotic. Pruning trees was one of his amusements; and in the proper season he might be seen almost daily in his grounds and gardens with a pruning-hook or other horticultural implements in his hands. Skilful gardeners were sought by him from Europe, whose knowledge and experience enabled him to execute his plans.

Although relieved from public cares, he soon discovered, that the prospect, which he had so fondly cherished, of enjoying the repose of retirement, was much brighter than the reality. Writing to General Knox, he said, "It is not the letters from my friends, which give me trouble, or add aught to my perplexity. It is references to old matters, with which I have nothing to do; applications which oftentimes cannot be complied with; inquiries which would require the pen of an historian to satisfy; letters of compliment, as unmeaning perhaps as they are troublesome, but which must be attended to; and the commonplace business, which employs my pen and my time, often disagreeably. Indeed these, with company, deprive me of exercise, and, unless I can obtain relief, must be productive of disagreeable consequences." The applications, of which he complains, were chiefly from officers or other persons, who had been connected with the army, and who wished to obtain from him certificates of character, or of services rendered during the war, or some other statement from his pen, for the purpose of substantiating claims upon the government. His real attachment to all who had served faithfully in the army, as well as his humanity, prompted him to comply with these re-

quests; but in many cases they were unreasonable, and in all troublesome, as they required an examination of his voluminous papers, and a recurrence to facts which often could not be easily ascertained. And then his correspondence on topics of public interest, friendship, and civility, with persons in Europe and America, was very extensive. Add to this, his private affairs, the keeping of accounts, and his letters of business. For more than two years after the close of the war he had no clerk or secretary, and he was therefore incessantly employed in writing. At length this labor was in some degree lessened by the aid of Mr. Lear, who became his secretary, and resided in his family many years on terms of intimate friendship.

The multitude of visiters at Mount Vernon increased. They came from the Old World and the New. Among them were foreigners of distinction, particularly from France and other countries on the continent of Europe, bringing letters of introduction from the Marquis de Lafayette, Count de Rochambeau, Count d'Estaing, and some of the other general officers, who had served in America. The celebrated authoress and champion of liberty, Catherine Macaulay Graham, professed to have crossed the Atlantic for the sole purpose of

testifying in person her admiration of the character and deeds of Washington. His own countrymen, in every part of the Union, as may well be supposed, were not less earnest in their good will, or less ready to prove their respect and attachment. Some came to keep alive friendship, some to ask counsel on public affairs, and many to gratify a natural and ardent curiosity. This throng of visiters necessarily demanded much of his time; but in other respects the task of receiving them was made easy by the admirable economy of the household under the management of Mrs. Washington.

His habits were uniform, and nearly the same as they had been previously to the war. He rose before the sun, and employed himself in his study, writing letters or reading, till the hour of breakfast. When breakfast was over, his horse was ready at the door, and he rode to his farms and gave directions for the day to the managers and laborers. Horses were likewise prepared for his guests, whenever they chose to accompany him, or to amuse themselves by excursions into the country. Returning from his fields, and despatching such business as happened to be on hand, he went again to his study, and continued there till three o'clock, when he was summoned to din-

ner. The remainder of the day and the evening were devoted to company, or to recreation in the family circle. At ten he retired to rest. From these habits he seldom deviated, unless compelled to do so by particular circumstances.

The State of Virginia having resolved to erect a statue in honor of General Washington, the governor was authorized to employ an artist in Europe to execute it. Dr. Franklin and Mr. Jefferson, then in Paris, were commissioned to select the artist and make the contract. They chose M. Houdon, who was accounted one of the first statuaries of his time. It was the intention, that the statue should bear an exact resemblance to the original. M. Houdon engaged in the undertaking with great enthusiasm, and came to America in the same vessel, that conveyed Dr. Franklin home from his long and brilliant mission to France. He was at Mount Vernon three weeks, in the month of October, 1785, and modelled a bust of General Washington, as exact in all its lineaments as his skill could make it. The statue is a precise copy of the model, and is undoubtedly the best representation of the original that exists.

However much Washington was devoted to his private pursuits, so congenial to his taste and so exacting in their claims on his attention, yet neither his zeal for the public good, nor the importunity of his correspondents, would allow his thoughts to be withdrawn from the political condition of his country. His opinions were asked and his advice was sought by the patriotic leaders in the public councils, and by such eminent persons as had been his coadjutors in the great work of independence, who now looked with concern upon the system of national government, which was confessedly inadequate to stand by its own strength, much less to sustain the Union of the States. This union had hitherto been preserved by the pressure of war. It was rather the last resort of a stern necessity, than the spontaneous choice of all the thirteen republics. Peace had taken away its main props, and was fast dissolving the slender bands by which it was bound together. Congress was its centre of action; and this body, imperfectly organized, possessing little real authority, never confident in what it possessed, and often distracted by party discords, had become almost powerless.

The confederation had proved itself to be defective in many points absolutely essential to the prosperity of a national government, if not to its very existence. The most remarkable of these defects was the want of power to reg-

ulate commerce, and to provide for the payment of debts contracted by the confederacy. Without such power it was impossible to execute treaties, fulfil foreign engagements, or cause the nation to be respected abroad; and equally so, to render justice to public creditors at home, and to appease the clamor of discontent and disaffection, which so glaring a breach of public faith would naturally raise.

It was evident to all, that an alarming crisis was near at hand, scarcely less to be dreaded than the war from which the country had just emerged, unless a timely and effectual remedy could be provided. Washington's sentiments were often, freely, and feelingly expressed. "That we have it in our power," said he, "to become one of the most respectable nations upon earth, admits, in my humble opinion, of no doubt, if we would but pursue a wise, just, and liberal policy towards one another, and keep good faith with the rest of the world. That our resources are ample and increasing, none can deny; but, while they are grudgingly applied, or not applied at all, we give a vital stab to public faith, and shall sink, in the eyes of Europe, into contempt. It has long been a speculative question among philosophers and wise men, whether foreign commerce is of real advantage to any country; that is, whether

the luxury, effeminacy, and corruptions, which are introduced along with it, are counterbalanced by the convenience and wealth which it brings. But the decision of this question is of very little importance to us. We have abundant reason to be convinced, that the spirit of trade, which pervades these States, is not to be restrained. It behoves us then to establish just principles; and this cannot, any more than other matters of national concern, be done by thirteen heads, differently constructed and organized. The necessity, therefore, of a controlling power is obvious; and why it should be withheld is beyond my comprehension."

In short, the embarrassments growing out of the weakness of the confederacy, the utter inability of Congress to collect the means for paying the public debts or to provide for their security, the jealousies of the States, and the factious spirit of individuals, filled the mind of every true friend to his country with gloom and despondency. Congress had recommended an impost, or rate of duties, which was to be uniform in all the States, and the proceeds of which were to be appropriated to relieve the national wants. The States came tardily into this measure, as it seemed to be yielding a power, which was claimed as a special prerogative of State sovereignty. The States, in

which commerce chiefly centred, were influenced by another motive. A larger amount would be drawn from the revenue in such States, than in others of equal or greater extent, population, and internal wealth. The fact was overlooked or disregarded, that the consumers, wherever they resided, actually paid the impost, and that the commercial States, by controlling the imposts in their own ports, enjoyed advantages which the others did not possess. New York never acceded to the recommendation of Congress in such a manner as to make it operative; and, as the success of the measure everywhere depended on the caprice of the legislatures, and a rigid system of collection faithfully administered, there was but little hope of its answering the important end of supplying the national treasury.

A dissolution of the Union, or an early and thorough reform, was inevitable. The mode of effecting the latter, and saving the republic, was a theme upon which Washington dwelt with deep solicitude in his correspondence and conversations with his friends. By a concurrence of favorable circumstances his advice and personal efforts were made available at the beginning of the train of events, which ended in the achievement of the constitution. "To form a compact relative to the navigation of

the rivers Potomac and Pocomoke, and of part of the bay of Chesapeake, commissioners were appointed by the legislatures of Virginia and Maryland, who assembled at Alexandria, in March, 1785. While at Mount Vernon on a visit, they agreed to propose to their respective governments the appointment of other commissioners, with power to make conjoint arrangements, to which the assent of Congress was to be solicited, for maintaining a naval force in the Chesapeake, and to establish a tariff of duties on imports, to which the laws of both States should conform. When these propositions received the assent of the legislature of Virginia, an additional resolution was passed, directing that which respected the duties on imports to be communicated to all the States in the Union, which were invited to send deputies to the meeting." *

Accordingly, in January following, the Assembly of Virginia appointed commissioners, who were instructed to meet such as should be appointed by the other States, "to take into consideration the trade of the United States, to examine the relative situation and trade of the said States, to consider how far a uniform

^{*} Marshall's Life of Washington, 2d edition, Vol. II. p. 105.

system in their commercial relations may be necessary to their common interest and their permanent harmony, and to report to the several States such an act relative to this great object, as, when unanimously ratified by them, will enable the United States in Congress assembled effectually to provide for the same." The commissioners met at Annapolis, in September, 1786. Five States only sent deputies, and some of these came with such limited powers, that it was soon ascertained that nothing could be done towards effecting the object for which they had come together. Their deliberations ended in a report to their respective States, in which they represented the defects of the federal system, and the necessity of a revision. They likewise recommended another convention of deputies from all the States, furnished with requisite powers, who should meet at Philadelphia on the second day of May. At the same time they sent a letter to Congress accompanied with a copy of their re port to the States.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Proposal for a general Convention, and Washington appointed a Delegate from Virginia. — His Reasons for wishing to decline. — Society of the Cincinnati. — Washington accepts the Appointment as Delegate. — Attends the Convention, is chosen its President, and affixes his Name to the New Constitution. — His Opinion of the Constitution. — It is adopted by the People. — Washington chosen the first President of the United States.

When the legislature of Virginia assembled, the report of the deputies was taken into consideration, and it was resolved to appoint seven delegates to meet those from the other States in a general convention. Washington's name was put at the head of the list, and he was chosen by a unanimous vote of the representatives. The intelligence was first communicated to him by Mr. Madison, then a member of the Assembly, and afterwards officially by the governor.

He was not a little embarrassed with this choice; for, although he heartily approved the measure, yet he thought there were reasons of a personal nature, which made it inexpedient, if not improper, for him to take any part in it. He did not absolutely decline, but suggested his difficulties, and expressed a hope, that some other person would be appointed in his

place. As the weight of his name and the wisdom of his counsels were felt to be extremely important, in giving dignity and success to the proceedings of the convention, and as several months would intervene before the meeting, neither the governor nor his other friends pressed him to a hasty decision, trusting that time and reflection would remove his doubts.

His objections were frankly stated, and they are among the many evidences of his scrupulous regard to directness and consistency in every act of his life. "It is not only inconvenient for me to leave home," said he to the governor, "but there will be, I apprehend, too much cause to charge my conduct with inconsistency in again appearing on a public theatre, after a public declaration to the contrary; and it will, I fear, have a tendency to sweep me back into the tide of public affairs, when retirement and ease are so much desired by me, and so essentially necessary." There can be no doubt, that, when he resigned his commission in the army, he firmly believed nothing could again occur to draw him from the retirement, to which he returned with such unfeigned satisfaction, and which no other consideration than the superior claims of his country could induce him to forego. On the

present occasion he was not convinced, that his services would be more valuable than those of other citizens, whose ability and knowledge of public affairs, as his modesty would persuade him, better qualified them for the task of devising and maturing a system of civil government.

There was another objection, also, which seemed to bear with considerable weight on his mind. At the close of the war, some of the officers had formed themselves into an association, called the Society of the Cincinnati, the object of which was to establish a bond of union and fellowship between the officers, who had served together during the war, and were then about to be separated, and particularly to raise a permanent fund for the relief of unfortunate members, their widows, and orphans. Although Washington was not concerned in forming this society, yet he was well pleased with its benevolent design, and consented to be its president. Unexpectedly to him, however, and to all others connected with it, a very general dissatisfaction arose throughout the country, in regard to some of the principles upon which the society was founded. It was to be hereditary in the families of the members; it had a badge, or order, offensive in republican eyes, as imitating the

European orders of knighthood; it admitted foreign officers, who had served in America, and their descendants; it provided for an indefinite accumulation of funds, which were to be disposed of at the discretion of the members. Discontents grew into clamorous censures. Pamphlets were written against the society, and it was denounced as anti-republican, and a dangerous political engine. At the first general meeting, which was held at Philadelphia in May, 1784, Washington exerted himself successfully to have the most objectionable features altered, and the articles of association were new modelled conformably to his suggestions. After these changes the alarmists were less vehement in their attacks; but they were not silenced, and the society continued to be looked upon with jealousy and disapprobation.

A second general meeting was to take place in Philadelphia at the time appointed for the assembling of the convention. Before receiving notice that he was chosen a delegate, Washington had written a circular letter to the branches of the Society in the different States, declaring his intention to resign the presidency, and giving reasons why it would be inconvenient for him to attend the general meeting. He thought himself thus placed in a delicate

situation. Were he to be present at the convention, the members of the Cincinnati Society might suppose they had just grounds for suspecting his sincerity, or even of charging him with having deserted the officers, who had so nobly supported him during the war, and always manifested towards him uncommon respect and attachment. Having a grateful sense of their affection, and reciprocating in reality all their kind feelings, he was reluctant to put himself in a condition, by which their favorable sentiments would be altered, or their sensibility in any degree wounded.

Again, some of his friends in various parts of the country expressed themselves doubtingly in their letters, as to the propriety of his going to the convention, and some advised against it. Many thought the scheme illegal, since there was no provision in the articles of the confederation for such a mode of revision, and it had not been proposed by Congress. It was feared, therefore, that the doings of the convention would end in a failure, and perhaps in the disgrace of the delegates. They, who were perplexed with apprehensions of this sort, were unwilling that the brilliant reputation of Washington should be put to the hazard of being tarnished by an abortive experiment, and believed the interests of the country required

it to be held in reserve for a more fitting opportunity.

These obstacles, formidable for a time, were at last removed. Congress took the subject into consideration, and recommended to the States to send delegates to the convention for the purposes mentioned in the Annapolis report. Thus the measure was sanctioned by law. Congress likewise appointed the second Monday in May, as the day for the delegates to assemble at Philadelphia. The time was fixed with reference to the meeting of the Cincinnati, which was to be a week earlier, whereby General Washington would be enabled to join his brethren of that fraternity, should he think proper, and explain his motives for declining to be again elected president.

After these proceedings, and after it was found that the more enlightened part of the community very generally approved the scheme of the convention, his friends everywhere urged him to accept the appointment as one of the delegates from Virginia, and he acceded to their wishes. Another circumstance had much influence in bringing him to this decision. It began to be whispered, that the persons opposed to the convention were at heart monarchists, and that they were glad to see the distractions of the country increasing, till the

people should be weary of them, and discover their only hope of security to consist in a strong government, as it was generally called, or, in other words, a constitutional monarchy; for no one was ever supposed to dream of a despotic power in America. It has been said and believed, that a small party, in despair of better things, actually meditated such a project, and turned their eyes to some of the royal families in Europe for a sovereign suited to control the jarring elements of republicanism in the United States. However this may be, it is certain that no imagined remedy could have been more severely reprobated by Washington. We have seen with what a stern rebuke the proposal to be a king was met by him, even when he literally had the power of the nation in his hands. From the beginning of the Revolution to the end of his life, he was an uncompromising advocate for a republican system. In the abstract he regarded it as the best; and he had faith enough in the virtue of the people, and in the efficacy of their former habits, to convince him that it might be successfully established. At all events he was for having the experiment thoroughly tried; and his whole conduct proves, that, in regard to himself, he was ready to risk his reputation, his property, and his life, if

necessary, in a cause so momentous to the welfare of his country and to the social progress of mankind.

He did not go to the convention unprepared for the great work there to be undertaken. His knowledge of the institutions of his own country and of its political forms, both in their general character and minute and affiliated relations, gained by inquiry and long experience, was probably as complete as that of any other man. But he was not satisfied with this alone. He read the history and examined the principles of the ancient and modern confederacies. There is a paper in his handwriting, which contains an abstract of each, and in which are noted, in a methodical order, their chief characteristics, the kinds of authority they possessed, their modes of operation, and their defects. The confederacies analyzed in this paper are the Lycian, Amphictyonic. Achæan, Helvetic, Belgic, and Germanic. He also read the standard works on general politics and the science of government, abridging parts of them, according to his usual practice, that he might impress the essential points more deeply on his mind. He was apprehensive, that the delegates might come together fettered with instructions, which would embarrass and retard, if not defeat, the salutary end proposed. "My wish is," said he, "that the convention may adopt no temporizing expedients, but probe the defects of the constitution to the bottom, and provide a radical cure, whether they are agreed to or not. A conduct of this kind will stamp wisdom and dignity on their proceedings, and hold up a light, which sooner or later will have its influence." Such were the preparations, and such the sentiments, with which he went to the convention.

His arrival at Philadelphia was attended with public honors. At Chester he was met by General Mifflin, Speaker of the Assembly of Pennsylvania, and several officers and gentlemen of distinction, who proceeded with him from that place. At Gray's Ferry a company of light-horse took charge of him and escorted him into the city. His first visit was to Dr. Franklin, at that time President of Pennsylvania. All the States were represented in the convention, except Rhode Island; and, when the body was organized for business, General Washington was elected by a unanimous vote to the president's chair. The convention was in session four months, and the diligence of the members is proved by the fact, that they sat from five to seven hours a day. The result was the Constitution of the

United States, which was proposed to be substituted for the Articles of Confederation. On the 17th of September, 1787, the constitution was signed by all the members present, except three, and forwarded with a letter to Congress. By that assembly it was sent to the State legislatures, for the purpose of being submitted in each State to a convention of delegates chosen by the people, in conformity with a resolve of the general convention.

The constitution, as it came from the hands of its framers, was regarded by no one as theoretically perfect. To form a compact, which should unite thirteen independent republics into a consolidated government possessing a control over the whole, was not a work of easy achievement, even if there had been a uniformity in the previously established systems of the several States. The difficulty was increased by the wide differences in their situation, extent, habits, wealth, and particular in-Rights and privileges were to be surrendered, not always in proportion to the advantages which seemed to be promised as an equivalent. In short, the constitution was an amicable compromise, the result of mutual deference and concession. Dr. Franklin said, in a short speech near the close of the convention; "I consent to this constitution, be· cause I expect no better, and because I am not sure it is not the best. - The opinions I have had of its errors I sacrifice to the public good." And Washington wrote not long afterwards; "There are some things in the new form, I will readily acknowledge, which never did, and I am persuaded never will, obtain my cordial approbation; but I did then conceive, and do now most firmly believe, that in the aggregate it is the best constitution, that can be obtained at this epoch, and that this, or a dissolution, awaits our choice, and is the only alternative." Again; "It appears to me little short of a miracle, that the delegates from so many States, different from each other in their manners, circumstances, and prejudices, should unite in forming a system of national government, so little liable to well-founded objections. Nor am I yet such an enthusiastic, partial, or undiscriminating admirer of it, as not to perceive it is tinctured with some real though not radical defects."

Similar sentiments were doubtless entertained by all the prominent friends to the constitution. Faulty as it was, they looked upon it as the best that could be made, in the existing state of things, and as such they wished it to be fairly tried. It was moreover remarkable, that what one called a defect, another thought

its most valuable part, so that in detail it was almost wholly condemned and approved. This was a proof, that there was nothing in it essentially bad, and that it approached very nearly to a just medium. If we judge from the tenor of Washington's letters, after it was sent out to the world, he watched its fate with anxious solicitude, and was animated with joy at the favor it gradually gained with the public and its ultimate triumph. It was universally agreed, that his name affixed to the constitution carried with it a most effective influence on the minds of the people.

The legislatures of all the States, which had been represented in the general convention, directed State conventions to be assembled, consisting of delegates chosen by the people for the express purpose of deciding on the adoption of the constitution. The ratification of nine States was necessary to give it validity and effect. The conventions in the several States met at different times, and it was nearly a year before the requisite number had passed a decision. In the mean time, both the friends and opponents of the constitution were extremely active. The weight of opinion, however, was found everywhere to preponderate on the side of the constitution. In some of the States it was adopted unanimously, and in nearly all of them the majority was much larger than its most zealous advocates had ventured to hope. Amendments were recommended in some instances, but in none was the ratification clogged by positive conditions of this sort. The same spirit of compromise and mutual concession seemed to prevail, that had been manifested in the general convention. In fine, though the opposition was strong, and upheld by a few of the ablest and best men in the country, yet the popular voice was so decidedly expressed on the other side, as to afford the most encouraging presages of the successful operation of the new form of government.

Each State convention transmitted to Congress a testimonial of its ratification, signed by all its members. When these testimonials had been received from the requisite number of States, an act was passed by Congress appointing a day for the people throughout the Union, to choose electors of a President of the United States, according to the constitution, and another day for the electors to meet and vote for the person of their choice. The former election was to take place on the first Wednesday in February, 1789, and the latter on the first Wednesday in March following.

It was no sooner ascertained, that the con-

stitution would probably be adopted, than the eyes of the nation were turned upon Washington, as the individual to be selected for that office, the highest, most honorable, and most responsible, that could be conferred by the suffrages of a free people. His reluctance to being farther engaged in public life was well known, but every one knew also, that he never refused to obey the call of his country, or to make personal sacrifices for the public good. This was a ground of hope and of confidence. In him the whole people would be united. As to other candidates, there would be differences of opinion, rivalships, and, it was feared, unhappy divisions, that might mar the work so successfully begun, and perhaps end in its overthrow and ruin. The interest felt in the subject, therefore, was intense; and at no period, even during the struggle of the Revolution, was the strong support of Washington more necessary, than at this crisis.

The public sentiment was too openly and loudly proclaimed to be concealed from him. Indeed those of his compatriots and associates, whose intimacy entitled them to use such a freedom, began early to prepare him for the result, by such arguments and advice, as they knew would be candidly considered, and be the best suited to act upon his mind. Some

time before the election, in reply to a letter in which the subject had been brought pointedly before him by a gentleman, then a member of Congress, he wrote as follows.

"Should the contingency you suggest take place, and should my unfeigned reluctance to accept the office be overcome by a deference to the reasons and opinions of my friends, might I not, after the declarations I have made, (and Heaven knows they were made in the sincerity of my heart,) in the judgment of the impartial world and of posterity, be chargeable with levity and inconsistency, if not with rashness and ambition? Nay, farther, would there not be some apparent foundation for the two former charges? Now justice to myself and tranquillity of conscience require, that I should act a part, if not above imputation, at least capable of vindication. Nor will you conceive me to be too solicitous for reputation. Though I prize as I ought the good opinion of my fellow citizens, yet, if I know myself, I would not seek or retain popularity at the expense of one social duty or moral virtue.

"While doing what my conscience informed me was right, as it respected my God, my country, and myself, I could despise all the party clamor and unjust censure, which might

be expected from some, whose personal enmity might be occasioned by their hostility to the government. I am conscious, that I fear alone to give any real occasion for obloquy, and that I do not dread to meet with unmerited reproach. And certain I am, whensoever I shall be convinced the good of my country requires my reputation to be put in risk, regard for my own fame will not come in competition with an object of so much magnitude. If I declined the task, it would lie upon quite another principle. Notwithstanding my advanced season of life, my increasing fondness for agricultural amusements, and my growing love of retirement, augment and confirm my decided predilection for the character of a private citizen, yet it would be no one of these motives, nor the hazard to which my former reputation might be exposed, nor the terror of encountering new fatigues and troubles, that would deter me from an acceptance; but a belief, that some other person, who had less pretence, and less inclination, to be excused, could execute all the duties full as satisfactorily as myself."

Suffice it to say, that his scruples yielded to the earnest solicitations of his friends, to mature reflection, and to the counsels of his unerring judgment. The day of election came, and George Washington was chosen,

by the unanimous vote of the electors, and probably without a dissenting voice in the whole nation, the first President of the United States.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

He receives official Notice of being chosen President. — His Journey to the Seat of Government at New York. — His Oath of Office and Inaugural Speech. — Acquaints himself with the State of public Affairs. — His Attention to his private Pursuits. — His Manner of receiving Visits and entertaining Company. — Afflicted with a severe Illness. — Death of his Mother. — Economy of his Household. — Executive Departments formed.

It being known that the choice of the people had fallen on General Washington for President, he made preparations to begin the duties of the office as soon as his election should be notified to him by the proper authority. The 4th of March was assigned as the day for the meeting of Congress, but a quorum did not come together till a month later. The votes of the electors were then opened and counted; and a special messenger was despatched to Mount Vernon with a letter from the President of the Senate to General Washington, conveying official intelligence of his election. John Adams was at the same time declared to be chosen Vice-President of the United States. Two days after receiving the notification, Washington left home for New York, which was then the seat of Congress.

His feelings on this occasion are indicated in the following extract from his Diary, written on the day of his departure. "About ten o'clock I bade adieu to Mount Vernon, to private life, and to domestic felicity; and, with a mind oppressed with more anxious and painful sensations than I have words to express, set out for New York in company with Mr. Thomson and Colonel Humphreys, with the best disposition to render service to my country in obedience to its call, but with less hope of answering its expectations." The whole journey was a kind of triumphal procession. He had hardly left his own house, when he was met by a company of gentlemen from Alexandria, who proceeded with him to that town, where an entertainment was provided for him, and where he received and answered a public address. The people gathered to see him as he passed along the road. When he approached the several towns, the most respectable citizens came out to meet and welcome him; he was escorted from place to place by companies of militia; and in the principal cities his presence was announced by the firing of cannon, ringing of bells, and military display.

A committee of Congress, consisting of three members of the Senate and five of the

House of Representatives, was appointed to meet him in New Jersey and attend him to the city of New York. To Elizabethtown Point came many other persons of distinction, and the heads of the several departments of government. He was there received in a barge, splendidly fitted up for the occasion, and rowed by thirteen pilots in white uniforms. This was followed by vessels and boats, fancifully decorated, and crowded with spectators. When the President's barge came near to the city, a salute of thirteen guns was fired from the vessels in the harbor, and from the Battery. At the landing he was again saluted by a discharge of artillery, and was joined by the governor and other officers of the State, and the corporation of the city. A procession was then formed, headed by a long military train, which was followed by the principal officers of the State and city, the clergy, foreign ministers, and a great concourse of citizens. The procession advanced to the house prepared for the reception of the President. The day was passed in festivity and joy, and in the evening the city was brilliantly illuminated.

The first public act of the President was that of taking the oath of office. It was decided by Congress, that this should be done with some ceremony. In the morning of the day appointed, April 30th, at nine o'clock, religious services suited to the occasion were performed in all the churches of the city. At twelve the troops paraded before the President's door, and soon afterwards came the committees of Congress and the heads of departments in carriages, to attend him to the Federal Hall, where the two houses of Congress were assembled. The procession moved forward with the troops in front, next the committees and heads of departments, then the President in a coach alone, followed by the foreign ministers, civil officers of the State, and citizens. Arrived at the Hall, he ascended to the senate-chamber, and passed thence to a balcony in front of the house, where the oath was administered to him in presence of the people by Chancellor Livingston. President returned to the senate-chamber, in the midst of loud acclamations from the surrounding throng of spectators, and delivered to the two branches of Congress his Inaugural Speech. He then went on foot to St. Paul's Church, where prayers were read by the bishop, and the ceremonies were closed. Tokens of joy were everywhere exhibited, as on the day of his arrival, and at night there was a display of illuminations and fireworks.

Under auspices thus favorable, Washington entered again upon the career of public life, surrounded and sustained by the eminent leaders, who had acted with him in establishing the liberties of his country, and cheered with the conviction of having received the voluntary suffrage and possessing the good wishes of every American citizen. Yet he was aware, that the task he had undertaken was one of no common responsibility or easy execution. The hopes and expectations of his countrymen, he knew, were in proportion to the unanimity with which they had crowned him with honors, and laid the burden of their public cares on his shoulders. A new system of government was to be put in action, upon which depended the destiny of his country, and with the good or ill success of which his future reputation would be identified.

In his inaugural speech, after expressing his deep sense of the magnitude of the trust confided to him, the struggles his mind had undergone in deciding to accept it, and a consciousness of his deficiencies, he added; "In this conflict of emotions, all I dare aver is, that it has been my faithful study to collect my duty from a just appreciation of every circumstance by which it might be affected. All I dare hope is, that, if in accepting this

task I have been too much swayed by a grateful remembrance of former instances, or by an affectionate sensibility to this transcendent proof, of the confidence of my fellow citizens, and have thence too little consulted my incapacity, as well as disinclination for the weighty and untried cares before me, my error will be palliated by the motives which misled me, and its consequences be judged by my country with some share of the partiality in which they originated." With these sentiments, and with fervent supplications to the Almighty Being, whose guidance and overruling Providence he acknowledged in all the events of his life, he commenced the arduous duties of chief magistrate of the nation. In conformity with the rule to which he had hitherto adhered, he gave notice to Congress, that he should accept no other compensation for his services, than such as would be necessary to defray the expenses of his household and other charges incident to his public station.

As the various departments of government under the new system could not be instituted, till Congress had passed laws for their organization and support, the business belonging to these departments continued to be transacted by the officers, who had previously been charged with it. Mr. Jay acted as secretary

of foreign affairs, and General Knox as secretary of war. The treasury was under the control of a board of commissioners. The President requested from each of them an elaborate report, that he might become acquainted with the actual state of the government in all its foreign and domestic relations. These reports he read and condensed with his own hand, particularly that from the treasury board, till he made himself master of their contents. In regard to foreign affairs, he pursued a still more laborious process. With pen in hand he perused from beginning to end the official correspondence, deposited in the public archives, from the date of the treaty of peace at the termination of the war till the time he entered upon the Presidency. These voluminous papers he abridged and studied, according to his usual practice, with the view of fixing in his mind every important point that had been discussed, as well as the history of what had been done.

Among the private reasons, which had disinclined him to leave his retirement at Mount Vernon, were his growing attachment to agriculture, and his desire to pursue the system adopted for the cultivation of his farms. Since the war he had devoted himself with equal delight and constancy to this pursuit, and

brought his plans into a train, which promised the most satisfactory results. He had procured from Europe the works of the best writers on the subject, which he read with diligence and reflection, drawing from them such scientific principles and practical hints, as he could advantageously use in improving his modes of agriculture. He was resolved to mature his designs, and in the intervals of public duties to bestow a part of his leisure upon that object. With his chief manager at Mount Vernon he left full and minute directions in writing, and exacted from him a weekly report, in which were registered the transactions of each day on all the farms, such as the number of laborers employed, their health or sickness, the kind and quantity of work executed, the progress in planting, sowing, or harvesting the fields, the appearance of the crops at various stages of their growth, the effects of the weather on them, and the condition of the horses, cattle, and other live stock. By these details he was made perfectly acquainted with all that was done, and could give his orders with almost as much precision as if he had been on the spot.

Once a week regularly, and sometimes twice, he wrote to the manager, remarking on his report of the preceding week, and adding new

directions. These letters frequently extended to two or three sheets, and were always written with his own hand. Such was his laborious exactness, that the letter he sent away was usually transcribed from a rough draft. A press copy was taken of the transcript, which was carefully filed with the manager's report for his future inspection. In this habit he persevered with unabated diligence through the whole eight years of his Presidency, except during the short visits he occasionally made to Mount Vernon, at the close of the sessions of Congress, when his presence could be dispensed with at the seat of government. He moreover maintained a large correspondence on agriculture with gentlemen in Europe and America. His letters to Sir John Sinclair, Arthur Young, and Dr. Anderson, have been published, and are well known. Indeed his thoughts never seemed to flow more freely, nor his pen to move more easily, than when he was writing on agriculture, extolling it as a most attractive pursuit, and describing the pleasure he derived from it and its superior claims not only on the practical economist, but on the statesman and philanthropist.

The President had not been long in New York, before he found it necessary to establish

rules for receiving visiters and entertaining company. There being no precedent to serve as a guide, this was an affair of considerable delicacy and difficulty. In the first place, it was essential to maintain the dignity of the office by such forms as would inspire deference and respect; and, at the same time, the nature of republican institutions and the habits of the people required the chief magistrate to be accessible to every citizen on proper occasions and for reasonable purposes. A just line was therefore to be drawn between too much pomp and ceremony on the one hand, and an extreme of familiarity on the other. Regard was also to be had to the President's time and convenience. After a short experiment of leaving the matter to the discretion of the public, it was proved, that without some fixed rule he would never have an hour at his disposal. From breakfast till dinner his door was besieged with persons calling to pay their respects, or to consult him on affairs of little moment. His sense of duty to the claims of his office, and to himself, convinced him that this practice could not be endured. The Vice-President, Mr. Jay, Mr. Madison, Mr. Hamilton, and other gentlemen, concurred in this opinion, and by their advice a different mode was adopted.

Every Tuesday, between the hours of three and four, he was prepared to receive such persons as chose to call. Foreign ministers, strangers of distinction, and citizens, came and went without ceremony. The hour was passed in free conversation on promiscuous topics, in which the President joined. Every Friday afternoon the rooms were open in like manner for visits to Mrs. Washington, which were on a still more sociable footing, and at which General Washington was always present. These assemblages were of the nature of public levees, and they did not preclude such visits of civility and friendship, between the President's family and others, as is customary in society. On affairs of business by appointment, whether with public officers or private citizens, the President was always ready to bestow his time and attention. He accepted no invitations to dinner, but invited to his own table foreign ministers, officers of the government, and strangers, in such numbers at once as his domestic establishment would accommodate. On these occasions there was neither ostentation nor restraint, but the same simplicity and ease with which his guests had been entertained at Mount Vernon.

No visits were received on Sundays. In the morning he uniformly attended church, and in the afternoon he retired to his private apartment. The evening was spent with his family, and then an intimate friend would sometimes call, but promiscuous company was not admitted.

Having laid down these general rules, which soon became known to the public, he found relief from a heavy tax upon his time, and more leisure for a faithful discharge of his duties. In the course of the summer, however, he was seized with a violent malady, which reduced him very low, and which for a few days was thought to endanger his life. He was confined six weeks to his bed, and it was more than twelve before his strength was restored. A constitution naturally strong, and the attendance of Dr. Bard, a physician equally eminent for the excellence of his character and skill in his profession, enabled him to rise from an illness the most painful and trying that he had ever endured. From the effects of it he never entirely recovered.

He had hardly gained strength to go abroad, when he heard of the death of his mother, who died in August, at the age of eighty-two. Writing to his sister on this occasion he said; "Awful and affecting as the death of a parent is, there is consolation in knowing, that Heaven has spared ours to an age beyond which few

attain, and favored her with the full enjoyment of her mental faculties, and as much bodily strength as usually falls to the lot of fourscore. Under these considerations, and a hope that she is translated to a happier place, it is the duty of her relatives to yield due submission to the decrees of the Creator." A short time before he left Mount Vernon for New York, he made a visit to his mother at Fredericksburg, the place of her residence. She was then sinking under a disease, which he foresaw would prove fatal; and he took an affecting and final leave of her, convinced he should never see her again. She had been a widow forty-six years. Through life she was remarkable for vigor of mind and body, simplicity of manners, and uprightness of character. She must have felt a mother's joy at the success and renown of her son, but they caused no change in her deportment or style of living. Whenever he visited her at her dwelling, even in the height of his greatness, he literally returned to the scenes and domestic habits of his boyhood. Neither pride nor vanity mingled with the feelings excited by the attentions she received as the mother of Washington. She listened to his praises and was silent, or added only that he had been a good son, and she believed he had done his duty as a man.

As soon as he was established in his office, Washington introduced strict habits of economy into his household, which were preserved without essential change to the end of his public life. The whole was under the care of a steward, to whom he gave general directions. All other persons connected with the establishment were accountable to the steward, but each of them was required to keep an exact record of the purchases and expenditures made by him, specifying every particular. These accounts, with tradesmen's bills and other vouchers, were presented once a week to Washington, who inspected them minutely, and certified with his own signature that they were approved. By this method he was enabled to ascertain at any moment the precise state of his pecuniary affairs, and to guard against extravagance and waste. He might say with Seneca; "I keep an account of my expenses; I cannot affirm that I lose nothing, but I can tell you what I lose, and why, and in what manner." The salary of the President, as fixed by law, was twenty-five thousand dollars a year. But with the most rigid economy his expenses were seldom within this limit, and he was of course obliged to draw on his private fortune to make up the deficiency.

Congress continued in session till near the

end of September, when they adjourned for three months. They had been mostly occupied in passing laws for the organization of the government, the administration of justice, and the raising of a revenue. Mercantile regulations were established, imposing duties on tonnage and imported goods. Amendments to the constitution were framed, and recommended to the States for adoption. Three executive departments were formed, at the head of each of which was to be a secretary, namely, the departments of foreign affairs, of the treasury, and of war. The first was afterwards called the department of state, and included both foreign and domestic affairs. So large a portion of the administration of government is effected by the executives of the several States, that a separate department for internal affairs was not thought necessary. The navy too was at this time so small, as not to require a distinct department. It was mainly in the charge of the secretary of war.

CHAPTER XXXV.

Officers of the Executive Departments appointed. — Judiciary System organized. — Washington's Opinion of the Supreme Court. — His Rule in Appointments to Office. — His Journey through the Eastern States. — System of Funding the Public Debts. — Place for the permanent Seat of Government agreed upon.

The requisite laws being passed, it next devolved on the President to select proper persons to fill the several offices. In regard to the executive departments, this was of very great importance, inasmuch as the secretaries were not only to discharge the duties assigned to them by the constitution and laws, but were to be his cabinet, or council of state. On the wisdom of his choice, therefore, would in a great degree depend the character and success of his administration. So much time had elapsed in the session of congress, that he had been able to take a full survey of the subject, and to decide with deliberation.

Long experience in public affairs, a high political standing, and acknowledged talents, pointed out Thomas Jefferson as eminently qualified for the state department. He was about to return from France, where he had filled the office of minister plenipotentiary, as

successor to Dr. Franklin, with much credit to himself and his country. Alexander Hamilton was appointed to the head of the treasury. His transcendent abilities, integrity, firmness, and patriotism were well known to Washington, after a thorough trial and familiar acquaintance in the Revolution; and they were scarcely less known or less appreciated by his countrymen at large. In the convention, Hamilton disapproved and opposed some of the principal articles of the constitution; and the more praise is due to him, that, after it was carried by a majority, and was proved to be the best that could be hoped for in the circumstances of the times, he gave up his predilections, joined heartily with its friends, and put into their scale the whole weight of his great powers of eloquence and argument, both in debate and by the use of his pen. Henry Knox was continued secretary of war, which station he had held under the confederation. As an officer, a man, and a friend, he was esteemed by Washington; and his steady principles and public services had gained for him a general confidence. The post of attorneygeneral was conferred on Edmund Randolph, a gentleman distinguished by success in his profession at the bar, and by having been governor of Virginia, and a conspicuous member

of the convention that framed the constitution. Such were the heads of the executive departments, and such the composition of the council, on which the President was mainly to rely for advice and support.

For administering justice, in the execution of the laws for national purposes, the constitution had provided, that there should be a supreme court, and such inferior courts as Congress should establish. In organizing the judiciary system, it was decided that the supreme court should consist of a chief justice and five associate justices, and that there should be district courts, with one judge in each State. An associate justice and a district judge constituted a circuit court. Washington's opinion of the importance of the supreme court is forcibly described in his own language. "Impressed with a conviction," said he, "that the due administration of justice is the firmest pillar of good government, I have considered the first arrangement of the judicial department as essential to the happiness of the country, and to the stability of its political system. Hence the selection of the fittest characters to expound the laws, and dispense justice, has been an invariable object of my anxious concern." And again, in giving notice to Mr. Jay of his appointment as chief justice; "I have a full 16

confidence that the love which you bear to our country, and a desire to promote the general happiness, will not suffer you to hesitate a moment to bring into action the talents, knowledge, and integrity, which are so necessary to be exercised at the head of that department, which must be considered the keystone of our political fabric."

These views of the judiciary department, as forming a most essential branch of the government, and as claiming the highest consideration, he always entertained; and in the appointment of justices, and judges of the district courts, he was extremely solicitous to secure the services of those, who were eminent for judicial knowledge, talents, personal worth, and experience. In placing John Jay at the head of the supreme court, he consulted alike the public good, the dignity of the court, and his own feelings. No man in the nation possessed a larger share of confidence, whether in regard to his ability or his legal attainments; none was more valued for the services he had rendered to his country, none more esteemed for his private virtues. The choice of his associates was also fortunate, and the court assumed a respectability and weight suited to the rank conferred upon it by the constitution.

No part of the President's duties gave him

more anxiety, than that of distributing the offices in his gift. Applications innumerable flowed in upon him even before he left Mount Vernon, many of them from his personal friends, and others supported by the recommendations of his friends; nor did they cease as long as any vacancies remained. He early prescribed to himself a rule, however, from which he never swerved, which was to give no pledges or encouragement to any applicant. He answered them all civilly, but avowed his determination to suspend a decision till the time of making the appointments should arrive, and then, without favor or bias, to select such individuals as in his judgment were best qualified to execute with faithfulness and ability the trust reposed in them. His sentiments and motives are well explained in a letter written to a gentleman, who had solicited an office for another person.

"From the moment when the necessity had become more apparent," said he, "and as it were inevitable, I anticipated, with a heart filled with distress, the ten thousand embarrassments, perplexities, and troubles, to which I must again be exposed in the evening of a life already nearly consumed in public cares. Among all these anxieties, I will not conceal from you, I anticipated none greater, than those

that were likely to be produced by applications for appointments to the different offices, which would be created under the new government. Nor will I conceal, that my apprehensions have already been but too well justified. Scarcely a day passes, in which applications of one kind or another do not arrive; insomuch that, had I not early adopted some general principles, I should before this time have been wholly occupied in this business. As it is, I have found the number of answers, which I have been necessitated to give in my own hand, an almost insupportable burden to me.

"The points in which all these answers have agreed in substance are, that, should it be my lot to go again into public office, I would go without being under any possible engagements of any nature whatsoever; that, so far as I knew my own heart, I would not be in the remotest degree influenced, in making nominations, by motives arising from the ties of family or blood; and that, on the other hand, three things, in my opinion, ought principally to be regarded, namely, the fitness of characters to fill offices, the comparative claims from the former merits and sufferings in service of the different candidates, and the distribution of appointments in as equal a proportion as might be to persons belonging to the

different States in the Union. Without precautions of this kind, I clearly foresaw the endless jealousies, and possibly the fatal consequences, to which a government, depending altogether on the good-will of the people for its establishment, would certainly be exposed in its early stages. Besides, I thought, whatever the effect might be in pleasing or displeasing any individuals at the present moment, a due concern for my own reputation, not less decisively than a sacred regard to the interests of the community, required, that I should hold myself absolutely at liberty to act, while in office, with a sole reference to justice and the public good."

In practice he verified these declarations, acting in every case with perfect independence, looking first to the national interests, and next to the best means of promoting them, and admitting no other ground of preference between candidates, whose pretensions were in other respects equal, than that of former efforts or sacrifices in serving their country.

For some time it had been the President's intention in the recess of Congress to make a tour through the eastern States, as well for the reëstablishment of his health, as for observing the condition of the people, and the general disposition in regard to the new form of gov-

ernment. He anticipated pleasure also in reviewing the scenes of his first military campaign as Commander-in-chief, and in meeting the associates, who had contributed to lessen his toils and invigorate his spirit in times of peril and despondency. About the middle of October he left New York, accompanied by his two secretaries, Mr. Lear and Mr. Jackson, and he was absent a month. He travelled in his own carriage, and proceeded by way of New Haven, Hartford, Worcester, Boston, Salem, and Newburyport, as far as Portsmouth in New Hampshire. He returned by a different route through the interior of the country to Hartford, and thence to New York.

Such was the enthusiasm, which was now felt by all classes of the community in regard to Washington, an enthusiasm inspired by his virtues and his fame, that it was impossible for him to move in any direction, without drawing around him thousands of spectators, eager to gratify their eyes with a sight of his person, to greet him with acclamations of joy, and to exhibit testimonies of their respect and veneration. Men, women, and children, people of all ranks, ages, and occupations, assembled from far and near at the crossings of the roads and other public places, where it was known he would pass. Military escorts attended him

on the way, and at the principal towns he was received and entertained by the civil authorities. Addresses were as usual presented to him by corporate bodies, religious societies, and literary institutions, to which he returned appropriate answers.

This journey was in all respects satisfactory to him, not more as furnishing proofs of the strong attachment of the people, than as convincing him of the growing prosperity of the country, and of the favor which the constitution and the administration of government were gaining in the public mind. He was happy to see, that the effects of the war had almost disappeared, that agriculture was pursued with activity, that the harvests were abundant, manufactures increasing, the towns flourishing, and commerce becoming daily more extended and profitable. The condition of society, the progress of improvements, the success of industrious enterprise, all gave tokens of order, peace, and contentment, and a most cheering promise for the future.

The time for the adjournment of Congress having expired, the two houses reassembled in the first week of January. The President met them in the senate-chamber, and delivered his speech at the opening of the session. Such was the custom during Washington's admin-

istration; but it was afterwards changed, and the President communicated with Congress only by written messages. This was likewise Washington's practice, except at the beginning of a session, when he addressed the two houses in person. These addresses were called speeches, and other communications were designated as messages. At this time, after congratulating Congress on the prosperous condition of the country, and the favor with which their previous doings had been received, he recommended several subjects as claiming their attention, particularly a provision for the common defence; laws for naturalizing foreigners; a uniformity in the currency, weights, and measures; the encouragement of agriculture, commerce, and manufactures; the promotion of science and literature; and an effective system for the support of public credit.

To the difficulties involved in this last subject may indeed be traced the primary causes of the constitution, and it had already attracted the notice of the national legislature. The former session had necessarily been consumed in framing laws for putting the new government in operation; but, a few days before its close, a resolution was passed by the House of Representatives, in which it was declared

that an adequate provision for the support of public credit was essential to the national honor and prosperity, and the Secretary of the Treasury was directed to prepare a plan for the purpose, and report it to the House at the next session. The national debt had its origin chiefly in the Revolution. It was of two kinds, foreign and domestic. The foreign debt amounted to nearly twelve millions of dollars, and was due to France, the Hollanders, and a very small part to Spain. The domestic debt, due to individuals in the United States for loans to the government and supplies furnished to the army, was about fortytwo millions. These debts had been contracted by Congress, and were acknowledged to be a national charge. There was another description of debts, amounting by estimate to about twenty-five millions of dollars, which rested on a different footing. The States individually had constructed works of defence within their respective limits, advanced pay and bounties to Continental troops and militia, and supplied provisions, clothing, and munitions of war. The secretary proposed, that all the domestic debts, including those of the particular States, should be funded, and that the nation should become responsible for their payment to the full amount.

The report was able, perspicuous, and comprehensive, embracing a complete view of the subject, and containing arguments of great cogency in support of the plan suggested. As to the foreign debt, there was no question in the mind of any one, that it ought to be discharged according to the strict letter of the contracts, but in regard to the domestic debts a difference of opinion prevailed. The secretary endeavored to prove, that no distinction should be admitted, that the expenditures had all been made for national objects, and that in equity the public faith was solemnly pledged for their reimbursement. The obligation was increased by their being "the price of liberty," without which the nation itself could never have attained an independent existence. He argued that the policy of the measure was not less obvious than its justice, that public credit was essential to the support of government under any form, and that this could be maintained only by good faith in all transactions, and by honorably fulfilling en-Who would confide in a governgagements. ment, that had refused to pay its debts, or respect a nation that had shown a disregard to the principles, which constitute the cement of every well ordered community?

When the report was considered in Con-

gress, it gave rise to warm and protracted debates. The opponents of the secretary's plan were not without plausible reasons. As to the debt contracted by Congress, it was said that the usual maxims could not properly be applied. The evidences of this debt consisted in a paper currency and certificates, which, as there was no gold or silver, the creditors were from the necessity of the case obliged to take. This paper had in most cases passed through many hands, and was immensely depreciated below its nominal value. The original creditors, therefore, and the subsequent holders, had lost in proportion to the scale of depreciation. Hence the proposal to assume the whole debt, as it stood on the face of the paper, and pay it to the present holders, was said to be inequitable, inasmuch as these had purchased it at the depreciated value, and had no claim to be remunerated for the losses of the previous holders.

Mr. Madison proposed a discrimination, by which the purchasers should be paid a certain portion, and the original holders the remainder. This was objected to as unjust and impracticable. By the form and tenor of the certificates, the debt was made payable to the original creditor or bearer. On these terms they had been sold, and the sellers had relin-

quished all their claims to the purchasers for what was deemed an equivalent. When the transfers were made, it was understood by both parties to be on this principle, and the purchaser took the risk of eventual payment. It was clear, also, that it would be impossible to make the discrimination, except to a limited extent and in a partial manner, since the numerous transfers of the original creditors could not be ascertained and examined; and even at best no provision was offered for the losses of the intermediate holders by the gradual depreciation. After a long debate in the House of Representatives this scheme was rejected.

Next came up the State debts; and the proposition to assume them created still greater divisions and heats in Congress, and much excitement abroad. It brought into action all the local prejudices and high-toned doctrines of State rights and State sovereignty, which had been so heavy a stumblingblock in the way of union and concord from the beginning of the Revolution. The debts of the respective States were very unequal in amount. This led to an investigation of the services rendered by each, and to invidious comparisons. The project was opposed as unconstitutional and unjust. Congress, it was said, had no power to take this burden upon the

nation. Such an assumption of power was moreover an encroachment upon the sovereignty of the States, tending to diminish their importance, and lead to a consolidation destructive of the republican system. Each State was responsible for the debts it had contracted, and there was no reason for taxing those States, which owed little, to pay a portion of the large debt of others.

It was argued in reply, that, as the expenditures had all been for the common cause of the nation, they came strictly within the legitimate control of Congress; and also, as the constitution had transferred to the national legislature the entire power of raising funds from duties on imports and the sales of public lands, the principal sources of revenue, it was just that the debts should be paid out of these funds. The States could pay them only by excise duties, or direct taxes, which would be odious to the people and difficult to collect. In any event there must be long delays, and much uncertainty as to the result. The creditors had a right to claim more prompt payment, and better security from the nation.

At last the secretary's plan for funding all the domestic debts was carried by a small majority in both houses of Congress. In regard to the State debts, however, the original proposition was modified. The specific sum of twenty-one millions and a half of dollars was assumed, and apportioned among the States in a proximate ratio to the amount of the debts of each. An act was passed by which the whole of the domestic debt became a loan to the nation. It was made redeemable at various times, and at various rates of interest.

One of the principal arguments for funding the debt, in addition to that of its equity, was the advantage that would be derived from it as an active capital for immediate use. Sustained by the credit of the nation, bearing interest and redeemable at certain times, the paper securities of the government would have a permanent value in the market, and thus be a spur to enterprise, and increase the prosperity of the country in its agriculture, manufactures, and commerce. All that was anticipated from the funding system, in these respects, was realized. Politically considered, however, it had an unhappy influence. It widened the breach of parties, produced irritations, and excited animosities. Nor was it to be expected that the adversaries of the plan, and these a large minority, would readily change their opinion after the strenuous opposition they had shown, or cease from their hostility. The

President expressed no sentiments on the subject while it was under debate in Congress, but he approved the act for funding the public debt, and was undoubtedly, from conviction, a decided friend to the measure.

Another important point, upon which Congress under the old Confederation had been for a long time divided, was settled in the course of this session. Local interests, and other considerations, made it difficult to agree on the place for the permanent seat of government. It was at length determined, that it should be removed for ten years to Philadelphia, and then be established at some place on the Potomac River. Ultimately the position was selected, which has since been called the District of Columbia; and the territory was surveyed, the city planned, and the public buildings commenced under the direction of Washington, this duty devolving on him as President. For three or four years it occupied a great deal of his attention; and, in compliance with the laws, he appointed commissioners for managing the business, with whom he carried on a voluminous correspondence, giving personal directions, and requiring exact accounts of all proceedings.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

The President visits Rhode Island and Mount Vernon. — Foreign Relations of the United States. — France, England, Spain. — Indian War. — Washington's Policy respecting the Indians. — Congress meets at Philadelphia. — A National Bank established. — Tax on distilled Spirits. — The President's Tour through the Southern States. — Apportionment Bill. — Parties and their Causes. — Dissensions between the Secretary of State and the Secretary of the Treasury. — Washington's Attempts to reconcile them.

RHODE ISLAND having adopted the constitution, and acceded to the Union, the President made a visit to that State immediately after the session of Congress. In his eastern tour he had avoided going to Rhode Island, because it had not then joined the Union under the new government.

Another severe disease, and constant application to business, had much impaired his health; and he determined to take advantage of the recess of Congress, throw off for a brief space the burden of public cares, and seek repose and recreation in his own quiet home at Mount Vernon. He always returned to that spot with delight; and it was now doubly dear to him, as it promised rest from labor, refreshment to his weary spirit and debilitated body, and a few days of leisure to ride over

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his farms, view his gardens, orchards, and fields, and observe the progress of his agricultural operations.

The foreign relations of the United States, at the beginning of the new government, though not complicated, were nevertheless in an unsettled condition. With France there was a good understanding, the treaties of alliance and commerce having been scrupulously fulfilled on both sides. The revolutionary disorders, however, soon broke out, and produced disagreements, alienation, and trouble.

With Morocco a sort of informal treaty existed, and Washington wrote two letters to the Emperor, who had received American vessels into his ports, and promised his aid to conciliate the Barbary powers. This promise was unavailing. The Algerines had seized vessels belonging to citizens of the United States, and held the officers and sailors in bondage for several years.

The government stood in a more delicate relation to England, than to any other power. The old feuds and bitter feelings of the war subsided slowly. All attempts to bring about a treaty of commerce between the two countries had failed. The British cabinet, probably distrusting the stability of the Union under the old Confederation, had shown no disposi-

tion to enter into a treaty of this sort, and had never sent a minister to the United States The military posts on the frontiers had not been given up, as was stipulated in the treaty of peace. The reason assigned, that some of the States had refused to pay the debts due to British subjects, which they were likewise bound to do by the treaty, was plausible, and perhaps well founded. Congress had but a limited power to enforce a compliance with treaties; and it was natural in such a case, that other nations should be tardy in making them. This state of things being altered by the constitution, President Washington thought it desirable to ascertain the views and intentions of the British government, in regard to complying with the treaty of peace, and to future intercourse. To attain this end he commissioned Gouverneur Morris as a private agent to hold conversations with the British ministers, deeming it of great importance, as he said, that errors should be avoided in the system of policy respecting Great Britain.

Affairs with Spain were yet more unpromising. At the outset of the Revolution, his Catholic Majesty, yielding to the solicitations of France, seemed to abet the American cause; but he soon changed his mind, refused to join with France in acknowledging the indepen-

dence of the United States, even when he declared war against England, and gave his sanction to the treaty of peace with no good will. He feared the effect, and not without reason, which the example of the northern republicans might have upon his colonies in South America. A negotiation had been going on, tedious as it was unprofitable, down to the time of Washington's election to the Presidency, but no apparent progress had been made. The Floridas and Louisiana belonged to Spain. The navigation of the Mississippi was the great point of controversy. This was essential to the settlers in the West, and was becoming every day more and more so on account of the rapid increase of the population. Spain persisted in withholding all rights and privileges in that navigation from citizens of the United States. There were various grounds of policy for this refusal, but probably the most operative was a secret hope, that the western inhabitants, weary of these obstacles to their commerce, and dissatisfied with the national government for not removing them, might sooner or later dissever themselves from the Union, and form a separate republic, which would easily fall under the control of Spain.

Other circumstances, growing out of the relations with England and Spain, were extreme-

ly injurious to the interests of the country. During the war, the Indians on the borders of the United States had almost everywhere been allied with the enemy. When peace came, it found them in the attitude of hostility, their savage spirit roused, and their vindictive tempers eager for slaughter and revenge; and the United States were left to appease and conciliate them as they could. In any case this would have been an arduous task, but the difficulty was soon perceived to be increased by a foreign influence, keeping alive their enmity, and stimulating them to acts of outrage. British agents and traders on the northern frontier furnished the Indians with arms, ammunition, and clothing. In Florida the Spaniards tampered with the Creeks and other Southern Indians, and kept them at variance with their white neighbors. These acts were not acknowledged, possibly not authorized, by the English and Spanish governments, but they were certainly not restrained, and they were repeated long after full representations had been made.

The effect was a protracted and expensive war. Washington's policy in regard to the Indians was always pacific and humane. He considered them as children, who should be treated with tenderness and forbearance. He aimed to conciliate them by good usage, to ob-

tain their lands by fair purchase and punctual payments, to make treaties with them on terms of equity and reciprocal advantage, and strictly to redeem every pledge. In these respects he looked upon the Indian tribes as holding the same rank and the same rights as civilized na-But their faithlessness, ravages, and murders were not to be tolerated, from whatever causes they arose. After failing in every attempt at a pacification, he was convinced that war was the only alternative. It continued four or five years, with many vicissitudes of misfortune and disaster, the defeats of Harmar and St. Clair, unsuccessful campaigns, and much waste of blood and treasure, till General Wayne put an end to it, first by a battle, and then by a treaty of peace. This war lasted through a large part of Washington's administration. It was a source of regret and pain to him, on account both of its cause, the necessity of subduing by force the turbulence of an ignorant and deluded race of men, and of the heavy charge it imposed on the nation for maintaining an army.

Congress commenced their third session at Philadelphia, and the President returned from Mount Vernon to that city, where he afterwards resided till the term of his office expired. The debates of this session were scarcely less vehement, or less deeply tinged with party antipathies, than those of the preceding. Two important measures were brought forward, discussed, and adopted; a national bank, and a tax on ardent spirits distilled in the United States.

The Secretary of the Treasury had previously recommended a national bank, as of great utility in administering the finances of the country, and facilitating the operations for the support of public credit. He now called the attention of Congress to the subject by a special report, in which his views were explained with the same perspicuity and vigor of argument, which marked every thing that came from his pen. The project met with a strong opposition. It was attacked chiefly on the ground of its being unconstitutional. Much was said of the express, incidental, and implied powers conferred on Congress by the constitution; and it was averred, that none of these, nor all of them together, authorized the incorporating of a bank. Its policy was questioned, and the utility of banking systems denied. To this it was answered, that such incidental powers must necessarily belong to every form of government, as will enable it to carry into effect the positive and vested powers, and to employ all the usual means for that

purpose; and that a construction of the constitution according to this fundamental principle fairly included the means afforded by a bank, to which almost all commercial nations had resorted, and the advantages of which had been proved by long experience.

The arguments were somewhat metaphysical and attenuated on both sides; and indeed the attempt to define what is intended or implied by a written instrument, on points about which it says nothing, must naturally lead to abstractions little suited to enlighten or convince. No other rule of interpretation would seem to be applicable in practice, than that a proposed measure shall contribute to the public good, and not contravene any express power. The contest ended in the establishment of a bank, with a capital of ten millions of dollars, of which eight millions were to be held by individuals, and the residue by the government.

On this subject the cabinet was divided, Jefferson and Randolph being opposed to the bank as unconstitutional, and Hamilton and Knox of a contrary opinion. The President requested from each a statement of his reasons in writing, and he is understood to have reflected deeply, and deliberated even with

more than his usual caution, before he affixed his signature to the act.

The object of the tax on distilled spirits was to provide a fund for paying the interest on a portion of the domestic debt. The duties on imports were said to be strained as far as they would bear, without injury to commerce, and perhaps to the revenue by holding out a temptation to smuggling; and, as a new tax must be laid somewhere, the Secretary of the Treasury thought it could fall on no commodity less objectionable than ardent spirits distilled in the country. The tax was opposed as impolitic and unequal in its application. It was branded as an odious excise, hostile to liberty, the collecting of which would inflame the people, and lead to evasions and perhaps to resistance. It was unequal, because distilling was practised mostly in the West, and a few limited districts in other parts. This argument was more specious than sound, since the consumers would actually pay the tax; but it was vehemently urged by some of the representatives. The bill was carried, and was more remarkable for its consequences, than for its characteristics as a legislative act, in whatever light it may be viewed.

The President had fixed on the next recess of Congress for a tour through the southern

States. He set off about the middle of March, and was gone three months, performing in that time a journey of eighteen hundred and eighty-seven miles with the same horses. route was through Richmond, Wilmington, and Charleston, as far as Savannah; whence he returned by way of Augusta, Columbia, and the interior of North Carolina and Virginia. Before leaving home, he had ascertained with great accuracy the distances between one place and another, settled the precise day upon which he should arrive at each, and the length of time he should stop. Not a single accident occurred; and with such exactness and method had his calculations been made, that his original plan was executed in every particular, except that he stayed one day more in one place than he intended, and one day less in another. He everywhere received the same proofs of respect and attachment, which had been manifested in his travels through the middle and eastern States.

The principal laws passed at the next session were those for apportioning the representatives, establishing a uniform militia system, and increasing the army. The constitution had prescribed, that the representatives in the national legislature should be apportioned among the several States according to the respective

numbers of their population, but that the whole number of representatives should not exceed one for every thirty thousand. When the new apportionment bill was proposed, it was found that no ratio could be chosen, which would not leave large fractions to some of the States. For instance, if thirty thousand were taken as the ratio, there would be an unrepresented surplus of fifteen or twenty thousand, more or less, in some of the States. To remedy this imperfection, a bill was introduced and passed, which fixed the ratio at thirty thousand. The total population was divided by this ratio. which gave one hundred and twenty as the whole number of representatives. But this included the sum of all the fractions; and, after apportioning to each State one representative for every thirty thousand, the residuary members, to make the whole number of one hundred and twenty, were distributed among the States in which the fractions were the largest. The President decided, that this bill did not conform to the constitution, it being obvious that the ratio was meant to apply to the States individually, and not to the aggregate amount of population in them all. He therefore returned the bill to Congress, with his reasons for not affixing his signature. A new bill was then framed and approved, fixing

the ratio at thirty-three thousand, and throwing out the fractions.

The subject derived an importance from the spirit of party, and local jealousies, which entered into the discussion. Many of the members were strenuous for as large a representation as possible, by which the rights of the States would be better preserved, and a check afforded to the undue increase of executive power. The bill for the increase of the army was opposed on the same grounds. It would enlarge the executive patronage, which might ultimately be adverse to liberty, and a greater evil than the Indian war, for the prosecution of which the army was wanted.

It became evident, indeed, from many indications, both in Congress and abroad, that the advocates for different measures were fast arranging themselves into two distinct parties, the administration and its friends on one side, and its opponents on the other. In the first place, they who had opposed the constitution would naturally have their prejudices arrayed against it when put in practice, and be ready to find fault with any system by which this was effected. Again, all those who had watched with solicitude over the rights of the States, and believed these in danger, would be prepared to see the fulfilment of their predictions

in the acts of the general government, however administered. If to these we add the bias of personal feelings, the influence of the passions, an unlimited freedom of speech, and the tendency of opposition to beget opposition, we shall have abundant materials for creating parties and aliment for their support. And, as parties gain strength by union, it was easy for these elements, at first discordant, gradually to assimilate. Nor need we question the motives of any individual or class of men. It is fair to presume, that, at this stage of our political progress, there was as much patriotism and sincerity on both sides as at any other period. It is true, that, when a man gives himself up to a party, he is apt to forget his country; yet in all free communities there must be parties, and every man must belong to one or another, so that his motives should be judged by his conduct and character, rather than by the side he takes. The necessity of parties is not identical with their abuse. The former is the safeguard of liberty, the latter its bane. If the people would enjoy the one, they must be enlightened enough to perceive and virtuous enough to correct the other.

But this is not the place to examine into the origin or principles of the two great parties, which at that time began to divide the country,

and which have continued ever since, with such modifications as have sprung from events and circumstances. It needs only to be said, that they were viewed with deep regret by Washington, and with a painful apprehension of their effects. Conscious of acting with the single aim of administering the government for the best interests and happiness of the people, he was mortified to find his endeavors thwarted at every step by party discords and personal enmities among those, who controlled public opinion by their standing and talents, and on whose aid he relied. It was not in Congress alone, that these jarrings occurred. They crept into the cabinet, disturbing its harmony, and dividing its counsels.

He had for some time been aware of a radical difference of opinion between the Secretary of State and the Secretary of the Treasury, on some of the most important measures of the administration. The causes were deeply seated. Hamilton regarded the constitution as affording inadequate powers to the general government, and believed its weakness to be its greatest defect. Hence he thought its success could be hoped for only by construing and administering it in such a manner, as would add the greatest degree of strength to the executive. Jefferson's sentiments and fears ran in

an opposite direction. To him it appeared, that there was too much power in the head, that the exercise of the executive authority ought to be restrained, and that the rights of States and the liberty of the people were in jeopardy. The funding system, the assumption of the State debts, the bank, and the tax on domestic spirits, were all at variance with his principles.

These measures originated with Hamilton, and constituted the prominent features of the administration. The ability with which they had been planned, and their success, contributed to elevate their author in the public estimation, which, to say the least, could not be supposed to gratify the feelings of his colleague, especially as he looked upon the measures themselves to be wrong and fraught with mischief; nor could it be expected, that the two secretaries would harmonize in devising the means of carrying them into execution. should be stated, nevertheless, that Jefferson discharged the duties of his office to the entire satisfaction of the President. Though differing in opinion from the majority of the cabinet, he did not allow his private views to influence his conduct as a member of that council, or as holding a responsible station in the government. Nothing more, perhaps, could

reasonably be required of him, under the circumstances in which he was placed; yet, as it regarded the success of the administration, a reluctant performance of duty was far from being the same thing as the cordial and vigorous support of a willing mind. In all respects, therefore, these disagreements were unpropitious, embarrassing to the President, and injurious to the public welfare.

The deep anxiety he felt on this subject, his ardent desire to heal the breach, and the means he took to accomplish it, will appear in the following extract from a letter, which he wrote to Jefferson.

"How unfortunate, and how much to be regretted is it, that, while we are encompassed on all sides with avowed enemies and insidious friends, internal dissensions should be harrowing and tearing our vitals. The latter, to me, is the most serious, the most alarming, and the most afflicting of the two; and, without more charity for the opinions and acts of one another in governmental matters, or some more infallible criterion by which the truth of speculative opinions, before they have undergone the test of experience, are to be forejudged, than has yet fallen to the lot of fallibility, I believe it will be difficult, if not impracticable, to manage the reins of government, or to keep

the parts of it together; for if, instead of laying our shoulders to the machine after measures are decided on, one pulls this way and another that, before the utility of the thing is fairly tried, it must inevitably be torn asunder; and in my opinion the fairest prospect of happiness and prosperity, that ever was presented to man, will be lost perhaps for ever.

"My earnest wish and my fondest hope, therefore, is, that, instead of wounding suspicions and irritating charges, there may be liberal allowances, mutual forbearances, and temporizing yieldings on all sides. Under the exercise of these, matters will go on smoothly, and, if possible, more prosperously. Without them, every thing must rub; the wheels of government will clog; our enemies will triumph, and, by throwing their weight into the disaffected scale, may accomplish the ruin of the goodly fabric we have been erecting.

"I do not mean to apply this advice, or these observations, to any particular person or character. I have given them in the same general terms to other officers of the government; because the disagreements, which have arisen from difference of opinions, and the attacks, which have been made upon almost all the measures of government, and most of its executive officers, have for a long time past filled me with painful sensations, and cannot fail, I think, of producing unhappy consequences at home and abroad."

He wrote likewise to Hamilton, nearly at the same time and almost in the same words, and added; "Differences in political opinions are as unavoidable, as, to a certain point, they may perhaps be necessary; but it is exceedingly to be regretted, that subjects cannot be discussed with temper on the one hand, or decisions submitted to without having the motives, which led to them, improperly implicated on the other; and this regret borders on chagrin, when we find that men of abilities, zealous patriots, having the same general objects in view, and the same upright intentions to prosecute them, will not exercise more charity in deciding on the opinions and actions of one another. When matters get to such lengths, the natural inference is, that both sides have strained the cords beyond their bearing, and that a middle course would be found the best. until experience shall have decided on the right way, or (which is not be expected, because it is denied to mortals,) there shall be some infallible rule by which we could forejudge events."

In another letter to Jefferson, after again recommending mutual forbearance and con-

ciliation, he said; "A measure of this sort would produce harmony and consequent good in our public councils. The contrary will inevitably introduce confusion and serious mischiefs; and for what? Because mankind cannot think alike, but would adopt different means to attain the same ends. For I will frankly and solemnly declare, that I believe the views of both of you to be pure and well meant, and that experience only will decide, with respect to the salutariness of the measures, which are the subjects of dispute. Why, then, when some of the best citizens in the United States, men of discernment, uniform and tried patriots, who have no sinister views to promote, but are chaste in their ways of thinking and acting, are to be found, some on one side and some on the other of the questions, which have caused these agitations, should either of you be so tenacious of your opinions, as to make no allowances for those of the other? I could, and indeed was about to add more on this interesting subject, but will forbear, at least for the present, after expressing a wish, that the cup, which has been presented to us, may not be snatched from our lips by a discordance of action, when I am persuaded there is no discordance in your views. I have a great, a sincere esteem and regard for you both, and ardently wish that some line may be marked out by which both of you could walk."

Unhappily this line was never found. The two secretaries continued to diverge from each other, both in their political course and their private feelings, till their differences settled into a personal enmity, which neither the advice of friends could modify, nor time eradicate. This was the more lamented by Washington, as, according to his own declaration and the whole tenor of his intercourse, he had a sincere attachment to both of them and confidence in their patriotic intentions, and as he foresaw the fatal consequences, which might result from a heated strife between men whose talents and political consideration gave them so commanding an influence over the public will.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Washington is elected President for a Second Term. — Takes the Oath of Office. — Relations between the United States and France. — Opinions of the Cabinet. — Proclamation of Neutrality. — Party Divisions and Excitements. — Genêt received as Minister from France. — His extraordinary Conduct. — Meeting of Congress. — The President recommends Measures of Defence. — Commercial Affairs. — Mr. Madison's Commercial Resolutions. — Mr. Jay appointed Envoy Extraordinary to negotiate a Treaty with England. — Military Preparations.

When the President's term of office, as prescribed by the Constitution, was drawing to a close, no little anxiety was felt and expressed, as to his willingness again to receive the suffrages of the people. The reluctance with which he had consented to the first election was so great, that it was feared he could not be prevailed upon to remain longer in public life. From his friends in different parts of the country he received early communications on the subject, urging him not to decide hastily, and, if possible, to reconcile himself to a second election. Three members of the cabinet, Jefferson, Hamilton, and Randolph, each wrote to him a long letter, containing reasons why it was of the utmost importance to his own reputation and to the public interests,

that, for the present at least, he should not retire.

Each of these gentlemen drew a picture of the condition of the country, its future prospects, and the state of parties; and, although they differed radically concerning some of the principal measures of the administration, they agreed in opinion, that the character, influence, and steady hand of Washington were necessary to secure the stability of government, if not to preserve the nation from anarchy.

These sentiments, uttered by his confidential advisers, whose political opinions he knew were at variance with each other, could not fail to make a deep impression, and the more so as they were reiterated from every quarter. He seems to have resolved at one time to follow his inclination, and retire at the end of his first term of service. This is evident from his having prepared a farewell address to the people, designed for the occasion of his taking leave of them. But he never made a public declaration to that effect, and he was finally chosen for a second period of four years by the unanimous vote of the electors. On the 4th of March, 1793, he took the oath of office in the senate-chamber, in presence of the members of the cabinet, various public officers, foreign ministers, and such other persons as could be accommodated.

In addition to the Indian war, the contests of parties, and other internal troubles with which the administration was embarrassed, the foreign relations of the United States were every day becoming peculiarly delicate and inauspicious. Scarcely had the President entered upon his new term of office, when the intelligence was received, that France had declared war against England and Holland. The French revolution, in its earliest stages, was hailed by almost every one in the United States as a joyful event, and as affording a presage of the happiest results to the cause of freedom and the welfare of mankind. Such would naturally be the first impulse of a people, who had recently been engaged in a similar struggle, encouraged by the good wishes and strengthened by the assistance of the French nation. Washington partook of this general sentiment.

The sanguinary acts that followed, and the ferocious temper shown by the leaders, left but little ground for hope; yet there were causes still, which induced many to cling to the interests of France, and approve the revolution, although they looked with horror upon the means employed to carry it forward. It

was believed to be a warfare of the oppressed against their oppressors, in which justice was asserting her rights, and rescuing from thraldom the victims, who had been so long borne down by the yoke of bondage, and scourged by the rod of despotism. A new era was supposed to have arisen, when liberty was about to go forth successful in conquest, breaking down the strong-holds of tyranny, and building up her temples of peace and concord on their ruins. Ardent minds were easily captivated by this illusion, especially when it harmonized with their opinions on other subjects. Their impressions also derived force from the prejudices against England, deeply rooted and of long standing, which the conduct of the British cabinet since the peace had not contributed to remove.

Gouverneur Morris had been sent to France as minister plenipotentiary from the United States. A friendly intercourse had been kept up between the two countries, on the basis of the treaties of alliance and commerce; but, after the downfall of the King, and amidst the distractions succeeding that event, the minister's situation was embarrassing. It was the opinion of Washington, in which his cabinet agreed with him, that every nation had a right to govern itself as it chose, and that other

nations were bound to recognise and respect the existing authority, whatever form it might assume. Mr. Morris was furnished with instructions according to this view of the subject. But the difficulty for a time consisted in ascertaining whether there was any actual government resting on the will of the nation. His prudence in this respect, and his caution not to commit his country rashly, gave umbrage to the nominal rulers, or rather the leaders of the contending factions, who complained, and expressed dissatisfaction, that the United States manifested so little sympathy with their earliest friends and allies, the vindicators of liberty and the rights of man. Such was the state of things when war was declared against England.

It was perceived, that this aspect of affairs would have a direct influence on the foreign relations of the United States, and that it would require the greatest circumspection to prevent the country from being embroiled with the belligerent powers, particularly England and France. When the President first heard the news of the declaration of war, he was at Mount Vernon; and he wrote immediately to the Secretary of State, avowing his determination to maintain a strict neutrality between the hostile parties. Vessels in the

ports of the United States were understood to be already designated as privateers, and he desired that measures to put a stop to all such proceedings should be adopted without delay.

On his return to Philadelphia, he summoned a meeting of the cabinet, submitting to each member at the same time a series of questions, which he requested might be considered as preparatory to the meeting. The substance of these questions was, whether a proclamation of neutrality should be issued; whether a minister from the French republic should be received, and, if so, whether it should be absolutely or with qualifications; whether, in the present condition of France, the United States were bound by good faith to execute the treaties between the two nations, or whether these ought to be suspended till the government should be established; and whether the guarantee in the treaty of alliance was applicable to a defensive war only, or to a war either defensive or offensive. These points involved very important considerations. If the treaty was binding in the case of an offensive war, then a state of neutrality could not be assumed in regard to France; and, if it was applicable to a defensive war only, the intricate question was still to be settled, whether the war on the part of the French

was offensive or defensive, or of a mixed and equivocal character, and how far the guarantee ought to be applied under such circumstances.

The cabinet decided unanimously, that a proclamation should be issued, "forbidding the citizens of the United States to take part in any hostilities on the seas, either with or against the belligerent powers, and warning them against carrying to any such powers any of those articles deemed contraband according to the modern usages of nations, and enjoining them from all acts and proceedings inconsistent with the duties of a friendly nation towards those at war." It was also agreed, with the same unanimity, that a minister from the French republic should be received. On the subject of qualifying his reception, the members of the cabinet were divided in opinion, Jefferson and Randolph being opposed to any qualification implying that the relations between the two countries were changed, and Hamilton and Knox being in favor of it, because they believed there was in reality no fixed government in France, and they feared that a recognition of the existing authority might involve the United States in difficulties with that nation and with other powers.

As to the question of guarantee, the two former thought it not necessary to come to any formal decision, while the two latter argued that the treaty of alliance was plainly defensive, and that the guarantee could not apply to a war, which had been begun by France. The President required the opinions and arguments of each member of the cabinet in writing; and, after deliberately weighing them, he decided, that a minister should be received on the same terms as formerly, and that the obligations of the treaties ought to remain in full force, leaving the subject of guarantee for future consideration, aided by a better knowledge of the condition and prospects of France.

The proclamation of neutrality was signed on the 22d of April, and immediately published. This measure, in regard both to its character and its consequences, was one of the most important of Washington's administration. It was the basis of a system, by which the intercourse with foreign nations was regulated, and which was rigidly adhered to. In fact it was the only step, that could have saved the United States from being drawn into the vortex of the European wars, which raged with so much violence for a long time afterwards. Its wisdom and its good effects are now so obvious, on a calm review of past events, that one is astonished at the opposition it met with, and the

strifes it enkindled, even after making due allowance for the passions and prejudices, which had hitherto been at work in producing discord and divisions.

Washington for a time was allowed to keep aloof from the contest. His character, revered by the people, shielded by their affections, and equally above reproach and suspicion, was too elevated a mark for the shafts of malevolence. But a crisis had now arrived, when the sacredness of virtue, and the services of a life spent in promoting the public weal, could no longer secure him from the assaults of party animosity. The enemies of the administration perceived, that the attempt to execute their plans would be vain, unless they could first weaken his influence by diminishing his popularity. The task was hard and repelling; and it may reasonably be presumed, that a supposed political necessity, rather that cordial good will, led them to engage in so ungrateful a work. It was pursued with a perseverance, and sometimes with an acrimony, for which the best of causes could hardly afford an apology; but, however much it might disturb his repose or embarrass his public measures, it could neither shake his firmness, nor turn him from his steady purpose of sacrificing every other consideration to the interests of his country.

In the midst of these ferments, M. Genêt came to the United States as minister from the French republic. He landed at Charleston, in South Carolina, and travelled thence through the country to Philadelphia. He was received everywhere with such enthusiasm and extravagant marks of attention, as to deceive him into a belief, that the great body of the American people heartily espoused the cause of the French revolution, and was ready to join the citizens of the new republic in carrying the banner of liberty and equality to the ends of the earth. Being of an ardent temperament, and emboldened by these indications, the citizen minister, as he was called, at once commenced a career, as unjustifiable as it was extraordinary. Even before he left Charleston he gave orders for fitting out and arming vessels in that port to cruise as privateers, and commit hostilities on the commerce of nations at peace with the United States. Notwithstanding this act of presumption and rashness, which was known before he reached Philadelphia, he was received by the President with frankness, and with all the respect due to the representative of a foreign power.

Genêt declared, that his government was strongly attached to the United States, and had no desire to engage them in the war; but his secret instructions, which he afterwards published, were of a different complexion, and proved very clearly, that the designs of his employers were contrary to the professions of their minister. Indeed his whole conduct, from beginning to end, could have no other tendency, than to bring the United States into an immediate conflict with all the powers at war with France. The privateers commissioned by him came into the American ports with prizes. This produced remonstrances from the British minister, and a demand of restitution. The subject accordingly came before the cabinet. In regard to the lawfulness of the seizures, there was but one opinion. It was decided, that, since every nation had exclusive jurisdiction within its own territory, the act of fitting out armed vessels under the authority of a foreign power was an encroachment on national sovereignty, and a violation of neutral rights, which the government was bound to prevent.

A declaration was accordingly made, that no privateers, fitted out in this manner, should find an asylum in the ports of the United States; and the customhouse officers were instructed to keep a careful watch, and report every vessel which contravened the laws of neutrality. The question of restitution involv-

ed intricate points of maritime law, and opinions on this subject varied. It was unanimously agreed, however, that the original owners might justly claim indemnification, and that, if the property was not restored by the captors, the value of it ought to be paid by the government.

The French minister protested against these decisions, became angry and violent, wrote offensive letters to the Secretary of State, and seemed to forget alike the dignity of his station and his character as a man. He still continued to encourage armed vessels to sail from American ports under the French flag. By the firmness of the executive a check was put to this effrontery. Measures were taken to prevent by force the departure of such vessels. The madness of the minister was increased by the obstacles he encountered. Finding himself baffled in all his schemes, he resorted to menaces, accused the President of having usurped the powers of Congress, and more than insinuated that he would appeal to the people for redress. This insult, aggravated by his previous conduct, could neither be tolerated nor passed over in silence. It was obvious, indeed, that nothing could be hoped from any further intercourse with so wrongheaded a man. A statement of the particulars was drawn up, and forwarded to the French government, with a request that he might be recalled. A more remarkable chapter can hardly be found in the history of diplomacy, than might be furnished from the records of this mission of Genêt. It is a memorable instance of the infatuation to which a man of respectable talents and private character may be driven by political frenzy.

When Congress assembled, the state of affairs, both external and internal, was largely explained in the President's speech, and in a separate message accompanied with many documents. In these were comprised the reasons for the course he had pursued, respecting foreign powers, and suggestions for additional legislative enactments to protect the rights of American citizens, and maintain the dignity of the country. While he sought peace, and urged a faithful discharge of every duty towards others, he recommended, that prompt measures should be taken, not only for defence, but for enforcing just claims. "There is a rank due to the United States among nations," said he, "which will be withheld, if not absolutely lost, by the reputation of weakness. If we desire to avoid insult, we must be able to repel it; if we desire to secure peace, one of the most powerful instruments of our prosperity, it must be known, that we are at all times

ready for war." These communications were well received by the two houses. Indeed both parties in Congress found so much to condemn in the conduct of the belligerent powers towards neutrals, that on this point they seemed for a moment to forget their dissensions; and, although the proclamation of neutrality continued to be made a theme of declamation and abuse by violent partisans and the presses hostile to the administration, it met with no marks of disapprobation from Congress.

Near the beginning of the session an important report was made by the Secretary of State, respecting the commercial intercourse of the United States with other nations, particularly in regard to its privileges and restrictions, and the means for improving commerce and navigation. The report was able, elaborate, and comprehensive, presenting a view of the trade between the United States and the principal countries of Europe.

Two methods were suggested by the secretary for modifying or removing restrictions; first, by amicable arrangements with foreign powers; secondly, by countervailing acts of the legislature. He preferred the former, if it should be found practicable, and gave his reasons. The subject of navigation was also

discussed, and a system of maritime defence recommended.

Shortly after making this report, Mr. Jefferson retired from the office of Secretary of State, in conformity with an intimation he had given some months before; having been prevailed upon by the President, apparently against his own inclination, to remain till the end of the year. He was succeeded by Edmund Randolph, whose place as Attorney-General was supplied by William Bradford of Pennsylvania.

The secretary's report gave rise to Mr. Madison's celebrated commercial resolutions, which were long debated in the House of Representatives with a degree of animation, and even of asperity, that had not been exceeded since the adoption of the funding system. These resolutions embraced the general principles of the report, but they aimed at a discrimination in the commercial intercourse with foreign countries, which was viewed in very different lights by the two parties in Congress. They imposed restrictions and additional duties on the manufactures and navigation of nations, which had no commercial treaties with the United States, and a reduction of duties on the tonnage of vessels belonging to nations with which such treaties existed. In

this scheme the friends of the administration saw, or imagined they saw, hostility to England and undue favor to France, neither warranted by policy, nor consistent with neutrality; while the other party regarded it as equitable in itself, and as absolutely necessary to protect the commerce of the country from insulting aggression and plunder. Mr. Madison's plan was modified in its progress; but a resolution, retaining the principle of commercial restrictions, finally passed the House of Representatives. It was rejected in the Senate by the casting vote of the Vice-President.

While these discussions were going on with much heat in Congress, a measure was resorted to by the President, which produced considerable effect on the results. Advices from the American minister in London rendered it probable, that the British cabinet were disposed to settle the differences between the two countries on amicable terms. At all events the indications were such, that Washington, firm to his purpose of neutrality and peace, resolved to make the experiment. Accordingly, on the 16th of April, he nominated Mr. Jay to the Senate, as an envoy extraordinary to the court of Great Britain. "My objects are," said he, in a letter to the Secretary of State, "to prevent a war, if justice

can be obtained by fair and strong representations of the injuries, which this country has sustained from Great Britain in various ways, to put it in a complete state of military defence, and to provide eventually for the execution of such measures as seem to be now pending in Congress, if negotiation in a reasonable time proves unsuccessful." The nomination was confirmed in the Senate by a majority of more than two to one; but it was strenuously opposed by the principal members of the democratic party, particularly Mr. Monroe, and was disapproved by the same party in the House of Representatives.

As a war seemed inevitable, if Mr. Jay's mission should terminate unfavorably, Congress passed acts for putting the country in a state of defence. The principal harbors were to be fortified, and eighty thousand militia to be held in readiness for immediate service. The importation of arms was permitted free of duty, and the President was authorized to purchase galleys, and lay an embargo, if he should think the public interest required it. Additional taxes were levied to meet the expense.

Congress adjourned, after a long and boisterous session, which had contributed not a little to increase the acrimony of parties, multiply the causes of dissension, and inflame the minds of the people. The administration, however, stood firm; and neither the policy nor the opinions of Washington were in any degree changed. In fact, having no personal objects to gain, thinking and acting only for his country, divested of partiality and prejudice as far as it was possible for any man to be, and invariably taking counsel of his conscience and judgment, he stood aloof from the commotions of party and the contagious influence of party spirit. Justice to all nations, peace with all, and a preparation for war as the best safeguard of peace, were the rules of his policy, and his constant aim.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Insurrection in Pennsylvania. — Measures adopted by the President for suppressing it. — Plan for redeeming the Public Debt. — The British Treaty ratified by the Senate. — Popular Excitement respecting it. — The Treaty confirmed by the Signature of the President. — Resignation of Mr. Randolph. — Circumstances attending it.

In the course of the preceding winter, M. Fauchet arrived in the United States as minister from France. At the request of the French government, Mr. Morris was recalled, and James Monroe was appointed as his successor. This selection afforded a strong proof of the impartiality of the President, and of his ardent desire to conciliate differences at home, and preserve amity with foreign nations. Mr. Monroe, being a leader among the opponents to the administration, had shown himself a zealous advocate for France.

Soon after Congress adjourned, the President's attention was called to another subject, of very serious import, both as it regarded the authority of the laws, and the stability of the union. The act of Congress imposing a tax on distilled spirits had, from its first operation, excited much uneasiness in various parts

of the country, and in some districts it had been evaded and openly resisted. The inspectors of the revenue appointed by the government were insulted, threatened, and even prevented by force from discharging their duty. To so great a length had these outrages gone in some places, as early as September, 1792, that a proclamation was published by the President, admonishing all persons to refrain from combinations and proceedings, which obstructed the execution of the laws, and requiring the magistrates and courts to exert the powers vested in them for bringing to justice the offenders. Bills of indictment were found against some of these persons, and the marshal attempted to serve the processes issued by the court. He was met by a body of armed men, seized, detained, and harshly treated. The malecontents proceeded from one degree of excess to another, holding seditious meetings, arming themselves, abusing the officers of the government, and bidding defiance to the laws, till they assumed the attitude of insurrection, and prepared for an organized resistance.

The moderation and forbearance, which, according to his usual practice, the President had exercised towards these deluded people for more than two years, served only to increase their violence, and encourage their de-

termined spirit of hostility. He could no longer hesitate, as to the course he ought to pursue. He resolved to employ the means intrusted to him by the laws, and suppress the insurrection by a military force. As a preparatory step, he issued a proclamation. dated on the 7th of August, in which, after briefly narrating the criminal transactions of the insurgents, and what had been done by the government to allay their discontents and turn them from their treasonable practices, he declared his determination to execute the laws by calling the militia to his aid, and commanded the insurgents and all persons concerned in abetting their acts to disperse and retire peaceably to their abodes before the first day of September.

Having sent out this proclamation, as a preliminary measure exacted by the laws, he next made a requisition for militia on the governors of New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia. The insurgents chiefly resided in the western counties of Pennsylvania. It was supposed there were among them about sixteen thousand men capable of bearing arms, and that they could bring at least seven thousand into active service. The number of militia at first ordered out was twelve thousand, and it was subsequently increased

to fifteen thousand. The Governors of Pennsylvania and New Jersey took the field at the head of the troops from their respective States, and the command of the whole was conferred on Governor Lee of Virginia. The place of rendezvous for the Pennsylvania and New Jersey troops was Bedford. Those from Virginia and Maryland assembled at Cumberland, the site of Old Fort Cumberland, at the junction of Will's Creek with the Potomac River. From every quarter the militia came forward with alacrity, and the best disposition was shown by officers and privates to execute the orders of the government.

The President, accompanied by the Secretary of War, inspected the army at the two places of rendezvous. He went, by way of Harrisburg and Carlisle, first to Cumberland, and thence to Bedford, these places being about thirty miles apart. He gave directions for each division to march across the Allegany Mountains, meet on the other side, and act against the insurgents as circumstances should require. Ascertaining from personal examination that every thing was in readiness, and leaving written instructions with General Lee, he returned to Philadelphia. Congress was soon to meet, and it was important for him to

be there at that time. He was absent four weeks.

When he left home he intended to cross the mountains and lead the army in person, if this should seem expedient; but the intelligence he received on the way, and the spirit which animated the troops, convinced him that the insurgents would make no formidable resistance to such a force, and that his further attendance on the expedition was not necessary. The Secretary of War went on with the army to Pittsburg. The result was even more fortunate than could have been expected. No resistance was attempted, and no blood was shed. To preserve quiet, and secure what had been gained, a body of troops continued for some time in the disaffected country, under the command of General Morgan.

In the President's speech to Congress, after mentioning somewhat in detail the course he had taken to suppress the insurrection, he recommended further provisions for defence, particularly a reform of the militia system, and also advised that some plan should be adopted for redeeming the public debt, which now amounted to about seventy-six millions of dollars. While this last subject was under discussion in Congress, the Secretary of the Treasury reported a scheme, which he had

matured on the basis of the laws previously enacted for regulating the fiscal operations of the government. A sinking fund had already been established by setting apart for that purpose a portion of certain specified taxes; and he proposed that this fund should be enlarged by increasing the duties on imports, tonnage, and distilled spirits, by the money accruing from the sales of public lands, the dividends on bank stock, and the surplus revenue remaining after the annual appropriations had been expended, and that the fund, thus increased, should be applied to the redemption of the debt. This report occasioned much debate, but the secretary's plan was substantially approved, and an act conformable to it was passed.

Before the end of the session, Hamilton resigned the office of Secretary of the Treasury. The vacancy was filled by Oliver Wolcott, who was strongly recommended by Hamilton, and whose character was well known and highly respected by the President. General Knox likewise retired from the war department, and was succeeded by Timothy Pickering, at that time Postmaster-general, whose services in the Revolution had qualified him in an eminent degree for executing the duties of Secretary of War.

The treaty with Great Britain, negotiated by Mr. Jay, arrived at the seat of government in March, shortly after the session of Congress was closed. The Constitution had provided, that all treaties should be ratified by the Senate, and the President summoned that body to meet in June, for the purpose of considering it.

In the interval, he examined and studied the treaty with the closest attention. It was not altogether such as he wished, perhaps not such as he had hoped. Points were left untouched, which he would gladly have seen introduced and definitively settled; others were so arranged, that he feared they would not prove a sufficient guard against future difficulties between the two nations. But he had perfect confidence in the ability, knowledge, and patriotism of Mr. Jay. He was convinced, that more favorable terms could not be obtained, and that the only alternative was this treaty or none. Some valuable privileges were secured, nothing had been sacrificed, the national honor was maintained, and a pledge of amity was held out. If the treaty was rejected, a war would certainly follow, the calamities of which, in the actual state of Europe, would be incalculable, and no one could predict when they would end, or to what they would lead. Deeply impressed

with these sentiments, and believing peace the greatest blessing his country could possess, he resolved, in case the treaty should be approved by the Senate, to affix to it his signature.

The Senate assembled in June, and, after two weeks' discussion, advised the ratification. One article, however, was excepted. By this article it was stipulated, that a direct trade between the United States and the British West India Islands should be allowed to American vessels not exceeding the burden of seventy tons, laden with the produce of the States or of the Islands; but that molasses, sugar, coffee, cocoa, and cotton should not be transported in American vessels, either from the United States or the Islands, to any part of the world. As cotton was then becoming a product of much importance in the southern States, and had begun to be exported, this restriction was deemed inadmissible; and the ratification of the Senate was to be valid only on condition that an article should be introduced, cancelling the one in which the restriction was contained. Nor was there a unanimity even with this limitation. A bare constitutional majority, that is, exactly two thirds of the members, voted in favor of the treaty.

As this was a novel case, the President was

somewhat at a loss to determine how to dispose of it. Whether the act of the Senate could be regarded as a ratification of the treaty, before this new article should be approved by the British government, and whether his signature could properly be affixed to it previously to that event, were questions which he took time to consider. A new obstacle was thrown in the way by intelligence from Europe, that the British cabinet had renewed the order for seizing provisions in vessels bound to French ports. As this order might imply a construction of the treaty, which could never be admitted in the United States, it was necessary still further to suspend his decision. Viewing the subject in all its relations, however, he inclined to the opinion, that it was best to ratify the treaty with the condition prescribed by the Senate, and at the same time to accompany it with a memorial or remonstrance to the British government against the provision order.

Meantime the treaty was published. At first an imperfect abstract only appeared; but a complete copy was soon after furnished by a member of the Senate to the editor of a newspaper. It thus came clandestinely before the public, without the authority of the executive, and without any of the official documents and

correspondence, by which the objects and reasons of the negotiators could be explained. It was dissected, criticized, and condemned, in a tone of passionate and violent declamation, which could scarcely have been exceeded, if the instrument had reduced the United States to their former colonial dependence on England. The merits of the treaty were studiously kept out of sight, and all its objectionable parts were thrust forward, exaggerated, and censured as disgraceful and humiliating to the nation. It was impossible that a clamor so loud and so universal should not produce a strong impression upon every class of the community. The friends of the administration rallied in its defence, but they used the weapons of reason and argument; they talked of moderation and peace, of consistency and good faith. They found few patient listeners, and fewer impartial judges. The torrent was neither to be stemmed, nor diverted from its course. Public meetings were held; and resolutions and addresses condemning the treaty, and designed to have a popular effect, and to intimidate the executive, were voted, published, and widely circulated among the people.

The first resolves of this sort proceeded from a meeting in Boston. They were forwarded by an express to the President, with a

letter from the selectmen of the town. He received them at Baltimore, while on his way to Mount Vernon. Ten days afterwards, having carefully reviewed the subject, and ascertained the sentiments of the cabinet, he answered the letter. It had been his aim, he said, in every act of his administration, to seek the happiness of his fellow citizens, to discard personal, local, and partial considerations, to look upon the United States as one nation, and to consult only their substantial and permanent interests. "Without a predilection for my own judgment," he added, "I have weighed with attention every argument, which has at any time been brought into view. But the Constitution is the guide, which I never can abandon. It has assigned to the President the power of making treaties, with the advice and consent of the Senate. It was doubtless supposed, that these two branches of government would combine, without passion, and with the best means of information, those facts and principles, upon which the success of our foreign relations will always depend; that they ought not to substitute for their own conviction the opinions of others, or to seek truth through any channel but that of a temperate and well informed investigation. Under this persuasion, I have resolved on the manner of

executing the duty before me. To the high responsibility attached to it, I freely submit; and you, Gentlemen, are at liberty to make these sentiments known as the grounds of my procedure. While I feel the most lively gratitude for the many instances of approbation from my country, I can no otherwise deserve it, than by obeying the dictates of my conscience." To these sentiments he steadily adhered, and he answered many of the addresses sent to him in nearly the same language.

From the excitement that prevailed, however, and from the resolves of meetings in all parts of the country, he soon perceived, that a formidable attempt was making to stir up the people, with a view of operating on the executive. To defeat this purpose, and to put an end to the disorders hourly increasing by the combined action of overheated zeal, artifice, and party spirit, he returned to Philadelphia, summoned the cabinet, and submitted the proposition for immediately ratifying the treaty. It was approved by all the members except the Secretary of State, who, although he had before been in favor of it, now thought the step premature, till the provision order should be revoked, and the war between England and France should cease. This opinion had no

effect on the President. He signed the treaty, the order was in due time repealed, and the ratification, on the terms advised by the Senate, was reciprocated by the British government.

It would be impossible, within the limits of the present narrative, to sketch even an outline of the transactions relating to this treaty. No more can be said, than that the controversy, occasioned by it, increased the violence of party discord to almost an incredible extent; and that even the motives and character of Washington did not escape a full measure of the abuse, which was poured out upon all, who approved the acts of the administration. Regardless of truth and decorum, his detractors assailed him with a license and malignity, which showed an utter despair of accomplishing their ends by honorable means. But however they might excite his commiseration, they could not disturb his peace of mind. "I have long since resolved," said he, writing to the governor of Maryland, "for the present time at least, to let my calumniators proceed without any notice being taken of their invectives by myself, or by any others with my participation or knowledge. Their views, I dare say, are readily perceived by all the enlightened and well disposed part of the

community; and by the records of my administration, and not by the voice of faction, I expect to be acquitted or condemned hereafter."

In relation to the treaty, time disappointed its enemies, and more than fulfilled the expectations of its friends. It saved the country from a war, improved its commerce, and served in no small degree to lay the foundation of its durable prosperity. The great points, which were said to be sacrificed or neglected, the impressment of seamen, neutral rights, and colonial trade, have never yet been settled, and are never likely to be settled satisfactorily, while England maintains the ascendency she now holds on the ocean.

The day following that on which the President affixed his name to the treaty, Mr. Randolph resigned the office of Secretary of State. The circumstances are these. While Washington was at Mount Vernon, the British minister, Mr. Hammond, put into the hands of the Secretary of the Treasury a letter from M. Fauchet to the French government, which had been intercepted at sea, whence it found its way to the British cabinet, and was forwarded to Mr. Hammond. The letter was translated by Mr. Pickering, and shown to the President when he arrived in Philadelphia. Its

contents were such, as to excite suspicions of Mr. Randolph's conduct. It appeared that his political relations with the French minister had been more intimate and confidential, than was compatible with the office he held in the administration. At all events, it seemed a fair inference from the language of the letter, that M. Fauchet valued his services as having been useful to the French interests, and calculated on them for the future.

In the presence of the other members of the cabinet, the President handed this letter to Mr. Randolph and asked an explanation. He had not before heard of it; and, although he read it without emotion, he expressed much displeasure at the President's manner of bringing it to his notice, and complained that he did not first converse with him on the subject privately. He said that he wished more leisure to examine the letter, before making any detailed remarks on its contents, but added, that, considering the treatment he had received, he could not think of remaining in his office a moment longer. Accordingly he sent in his resignation the same day.

Mr. Randolph published a pamphlet vindicating his conduct, and explaining such parts of the intercepted letter as related to him. From M. Fauchet, who was then on the point of

leaving the country, he also obtained a certificate, in which that minister declared, that in his letter he had no intention to say any thing to the disadvantage of Mr. Randolph's character. The statements presented by Mr. Randolph, in proof of his innocence, were not such as to produce entire conviction; but the nature of his task rendered it difficult, if not impossible, for him to adduce positive evidence. He moreover allowed himself to be betrayed into a warmth of temper, and bitterness of feeling, not altogether favorable to his candor. After all that has been made known, the particulars of his conversations with Fauchet, and his designs, are still matters of conjecture.

One fact connected with this affair should be mentioned, as being highly creditable to Washington. In preparing his vindication, Mr. Randolph applied for a certain letter, and intimated that papers were withheld. Washington said, in reply; "That you may have no cause to complain of the withholding of any paper, however private and confidential, which you shall think necessary in a case of so serious a nature, I have directed that you should have the inspection of my letter agreeably to your request, and you are at full liberty to publish without reserve any and every private and confidential letter I ever wrote to

you; nay, more, every word I ever uttered to you, or in your hearing, from whence you can derive any advantage in your vindication." When it is remembered, that Mr. Randolph had been in the cabinet from the beginning of the administration, the liberty here given affords a striking proof of the consciousness felt by Washington of the perfect rectitude of his own proceedings.

Mr. Pickering was transferred from the war department to the office of Secretary of State, and James McHenry of Maryland was appointed Secretary of War. Mr. Bradford, the Attorney-general, had recently died. He was succeeded by Charles Lee of Virginia.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

The President refuses to furnish Papers to the House of Representatives in relation to the British Treaty. — Captivity of Lafayette, and Means used by Washington to procure his Liberation. — Difficulties with France in regard to the British Treaty. — Recall of Mr. Monroe. — Washington's Farewell Address. — His last Speech to Congress. — Inauguration of his Successor. — Testimony of Respect shown to him by the Citizens of Philadelphia. — He retires to Mount Vernon. — Review of his Administration.

The foreign relations of the United States had begun to put on a more favorable aspect. Treaties were negotiated with Spain and Algiers, by which the prisoners who had been in bondage for many years under the latter power, were released, and the difficulties with the former, respecting boundaries and the navigation of the Mississippi, were amicably adjusted. The victory of General Wayne had also smoothed the way to a treaty with the Indians. On this state of affairs the President congratulated both houses of Congress, when he met them at the opening of the session.

But the British treaty was destined to be a cause of still further agitation. Great exertions had been made throughout the country to obtain signatures to petitions against it, which were to be presented to the House of

Representatives. And, when the treaty was submitted to Congress, as having been ratified by his Britannic Majesty, the members opposed to it indicated a determined purpose to defeat its operation by refusing to pass the laws necessary for carrying it into effect. The warfare was commenced by a resolution, to which a large majority assented, requesting the President to lay before the House the instructions to Mr. Jay, and the correspondence and other documents relating to the negotiation.

This request imposed a delicate task on the President. In his opinion, the power to form treaties rested wholly with the chief magistrate and the Senate, and he believed that the House of Representatives had no right to make a demand, which would imply an encroachment on this power, nor in any manner to interfere with the negotiation of treaties. Yet, in the present excited state of public feeling, a refusal of the request would expose him to the charge of showing disrespect to the representatives of the people, raise suspicions of his motives, and probably furnish a pretext for insinuations, that he had personal reasons for concealment.

From the line of duty, however, he was never known to deviate; and in this case it was too plain to be mistaken. In his answer to the communication from the house, he refused a compliance with the request, and gave his reasons. He said it was clear to his mind, that the power of making treaties was vested by the Constitution exclusively in the President, with the advice and consent of the Senate; that, having been a member of the convention, he knew this was the understanding of the framers of the Constitution; that the subject was fully discussed; that there were reasons for believing the State conventions understood it in the same way; that this construction had hitherto been acquiesced in by the House of Representatives; and that a just regard to the Constitution, and to the duty of his office, required him to resist the principle contended for by the house. If allowed to be put in practice, it would destroy the confidence of foreign powers in the executive, derange the government, and lead to the most mischievous consequences, when it would be too late to apply a remedy.

The members, who voted for the resolution, were not prepared for this refusal; nor did they conceal their disappointment and dissatisfaction. The message gave rise to a debate, which continued for many days, and in which the merits of the treaty, and the constitutional powers of the several departments of the gov-

ernment, were elaborately discussed. Passion, party zeal, eloquence, and argument were all brought to bear on the subject; and the speeches show, that both sides of the question were maintained with unusual ability and force of reasoning. In the end, a majority of the members who were opposed to the treaty yielded to the exigency of the case, and, probably more from expediency than conviction, united in passing the laws necessary for its fulfilment.

Among the events, which contributed to harass the mind and weigh upon the spirits of Washington, none affected him more keenly than the captivity of Lafayette. Gratitude for the services rendered by Lafayette to the United States in times of distress and peril, a respect for his character, founded on a long and intimate acquaintance, and a knowledge of his pure and disinterested principles, had created an ardent attachment, of which many proofs have been exhibited in this narrative, and many others might be added. In proportion to the strength of this attachment was his affliction at the sufferings of his friend.

After receiving the intelligence of his capture, Washington wrote letters to the Marchioness de Lafayette, expressive of his sympathy, and affording all the consolation in his

power. His regret was the greater, because, being at the head of the nation, the family of Lafayette, and the friends of humanity in Europe, expected much from his aid; while in reality he could do nothing more, except by his personal influence, than any other individual. Lafayette was a prisoner, first in the Prussian dominions, and next in the Austrian. There was no diplomatic intercourse between those countries and the United States. Hence the American government, without authority to make a demand or power to enforce it, either directly or through the agency of other governments, could take no decisive steps for his release.

Instructions were sent, and often repeated, to the American ministers at foreign courts, directing them to use all their efforts in his favor. These instructions were faithfully obeyed. Nothing more could be done. The mediation of the British cabinet was sought, but not obtained. That he might leave no means untried, Washington at last wrote a letter to the Emperor of Germany, stating his friendship for Lafayette, suggesting in delicate terms that his sufferings had perhaps been as great as the nature of his case demanded, and requesting that he might be permitted to come to the United States under such restrictions

as his Majesty, the Emperor, might think it expedient to prescribe. What influence this letter may have had on the mind of the Emperor, or on the fate of Lafayette, is not known. When restored to liberty, he was delivered over, by order of the Austrian government, to the American consul at Hamburg.

When the wife and daughters of Lafayette left France, to join him in the prison of Olmutz, his son, George Washington Lafayette, came to the United States. He was affectionately received into the family of President Washington, where he resided nearly two years, till he returned to Europe on hearing of the liberation of his father.

Not long after the treaty was conditionally ratified by the Senate, a copy of it was furnished to the French minister, M. Adet, the successor of M. Fauchet. He objected to some parts of it, as at variance with the treaty subsisting between France and the United States. His objections were answered by the Secretary of State, and such explanations were given as showed, that the treaty could in no degree injure the interests of France, and that the government of the United States was resolved faithfully to fulfil their compact with that nation, according to the strict principles of neutrality, which it was bound to observe

in regard to the belligerent powers of Europe. But the rulers of the French republic had viewed with jealousy Mr. Jay's negotiation, as diminishing their hope of a war between Great Britain and the United States; and it is not surprising, that they should be quick to find out points in the treaty, which, by their construction, might be turned to the disadvantage of France. Foreseeing this result, and anxious to remove every ground of dissatisfaction, Washington caused very full instructions to be sent to Mr. Monroe, that he might be able to explain the articles of the treaty, as understood by the American government, and also their designs and conduct in making it.

From the tenor of Mr. Monroe's letters, and from the proceedings of the French Directory, the President was led to believe, that the minister had been backward in using his instructions, and in furnishing the required explanations. It was known, likewise, that he was hostile to the treaty; and of course, with the best disposition to do his duty, he could hardly enter into the views of the government with the zeal, and represent them with the force of conviction, which the importance of the occasion demanded. The only remedy was to send out another minister. It was resolved, therefore, to recall Mr. Monroe, and make a

new appointment. This resolution was unanimously approved by the cabinet. Mr. Monroe was accordingly recalled, and Charles Cotesworth Pinckney was sent to supply his place.

Some months previously, Mr. Thomas Pinckney had been permitted to return home, having discharged the duties of his office in England, and on a mission for negotiating a treaty at Madrid, to the entire satisfaction of the executive and of his country. Rufus King, who had been a senator from the beginning of the new government, was appointed as his successor at the court of Great Britain.

When the second period of four years, for which Washington had been elected to the Presidency, was approaching its termination, many of his friends, concerned at the present state of the country, and fearing the consequences of the heats and divisions that would arise in choosing his successor, pressed him earnestly to make a still further sacrifice of his inclination to the public good. But his purpose was fixed, and not to be changed. He believed that he had done enough, and that he might now, without any dereliction of duty, resign the helm of government into other hands. Having determined to retire, he thought proper to make this determination

known in a formal manner, and at so early a day, as to enable his fellow citizens to turn their thoughts to other candidates, and prepare for a new election.

Accordingly his Farewell Address to the people of the United States was published on the 15th of September, nearly six months before his term of office expired. In this paper are embodied the results of his long experience in public affairs, and a system of policy, which in his opinion was the best suited to insure to his country the blessings of union, peace, and prosperity, and the respect of other nations. For the vigor of its language, the soundness of its maxims, the wisdom of its counsels, and its pure and elevated sentiments, this performance is unrivalled; and the lapse of forty years has rather increased than diminished the admiration with which it was universally received. The sensation, which it produced in every class of the community, was as strong as it has been permanent. Even the fierce spirit of party could not resist the impulse, nor weaken its force. The State legislatures, when they assembled, and other public bodies, voted addresses and thanks to the President, expressing a cordial approbation of his conduct during the eight years in which he had filled the office of chief magistrate, and

their deep regret that the nation was to be deprived of his services. In some of the States, the Farewell Address was printed and published with the laws, by order of the legislatures, as an evidence of the value they attached to its political precepts, and of their affection for its author.

The two houses of Congress came together in December, and Washington met them for the last time. As he had usually done in his former speeches, he first presented a clear and comprehensive view of the condition of the country, and the executive proceedings within the last year, and then recommended to their consideration certain measures, which he deemed important. Among these were the gradual increase of the navy, a provision for the encouragement of agriculture and manufactures, the establishment of a national university, and the institution of a military academy. The relations with France were made the subject of a separate message. At the end of his speech he said;

"The situation in which I now stand, for the last time, in the midst of the representatives of the people of the United States, naturally recalls the period when the administration of the present form of government commenced; and I cannot omit the occasion to congratulate you and my country, on the success of the experiment, nor to repeat my fervent supplications to the Supreme Ruler of the Universe and Sovereign Arbiter of Nations, that his providential care may still be extended to the United States; that the virtue and happiness of the people may be preserved; and that the government, which they have instituted for the protection of their liberties, may be perpetual."

Little was done during the session. Public attention was engrossed with the pending election. The votes of the electors were returned to Congress, and in February they were opened and counted in the presence of both houses. It appeared that John Adams was chosen President, and Thomas Jefferson Vice-President, the former having the highest number of votes, and the latter the next highest. The strength of the parties was tried in this contest. Mr. Adams was supported by the friends of the administration, or the federal party, and Mr. Jefferson by its opponents, or the democratic party.

On the 4th of March the President elect took the oath of office and assumed its duties. The ceremony was performed in the hall of the House of Representatives, and in the same manner as had been practised on former occa-

sions. Washington was present as a spectator, happy in resigning the burden of his office, and gratified to see it confided to one, whose long and patriotic services in the cause of his country rendered him worthy of so high a trust.

The citizens of Philadelphia celebrated the day by a testimony of respect for the man, whom they, in common with the whole nation, loved and revered. A splendid entertainment was prepared, which was designed for him as the principal guest, and to which were invited foreign ministers, the heads of the departments, officers of rank, and other distinguished persons. A spacious rotunda was fitted up for the occasion, in which were elegant decorations, emblematical paintings, fanciful devices, and a landscape representing Mount Vernon and the scenery around it, all conspiring to revive associations connected with the life of Washington.

The following anecdote was communicated by the late Bishop White. "On the day before President Washington retired from office, a large company dined with him. Among them were the foreign ministers and their ladies, Mr. and Mrs. Adams, Mr. Jefferson, and other conspicuous persons of both sexes. During the dinner much hilarity prevailed; but,

on the removal of the cloth, it was put an end to by the President, certainly without design. Having filled his glass, he addressed the company, with a smile, as nearly as can be recollected in the following words; 'Ladies and gentlemen, this is the last time I shall drink your health as a public man. I do it with sincerity, wishing you all possible happiness.' There was an end of all pleasantry. He, who gives this relation, accidentally directed his eye to the lady of the British minister, Mrs. Liston, and tears were running down her cheeks."

Being once more a private citizen, and having already made preparation for his departure, he proceeded immediately with his family to Mount Vernon. In passing along the road he was welcomed with the same hearty demonstrations of attachment, as when clothed with the dignity and power of office. Before he reached Baltimore, he was met by a military escort and a large concourse of the inhabitants, who accompanied him into the city; and it was not till he had actually arrived at his own mansion, in the tranquil retreat of Mount Vernon, that he could say he was no longer a public man.

In reviewing the administration of Washington, now that the effervescence of party is

subsided, and in tracing its effects on the formation and progress of the government, there can hardly be a difference of opinion. No one can doubt its wisdom or its success. Whether another system, more conformable to the views of those who opposed his principal measures, might not have operated equally well, is not a question which needs to be discussed. When a great and permanent good has been done, with the purest motives on the part of the actor, it is not necessary, in forming a just estimate of this good, to inquire by what other means the same end might have been attained.

Notwithstanding the innumerable embarrassments, which attended the first operations of the new government, the nation was never more prosperous than while Washington was at its head. Credit was restored, and established on a sound basis; the public debt was secured, and its ultimate payment provided for; commerce had increased beyond any former example; the amount of tonnage in the ports of the United States had nearly doubled; the imports and exports had augmented in a considerably larger ratio; and the revenue was much more abundant than had been expected. The war with the Indians was conducted to a successful issue; and a peace was concluded, which promised quiet to

the frontier inhabitants, and advantages to the uncivilized tribes. Treaties had been made with foreign powers, in which long standing disputes were amicably settled, contending claims adjusted, and important privileges gained to the United States. The relations with France alone remained in a state of incertitude and perplexity; and this was owing to the condition of affairs in Europe, and not to any thing that had grown out of the acts or policy of the American government.

CHAPTER XL.

Washington devotes himself to his private Affairs.—Troubles between France and the United States.—Preparations for War.—Washington appointed Commander-in-chief of the Provisional Army of the United States.—Organization and Arrangement of the Army.—Disputes with France adjusted.—His last Illness and Death.—His Character.

Being established again at Mount Vernon, and freed from public toils and cares, Washington returned to the same habits of life, and the same pursuits, which he had always practised at that place. It required neither time nor new incitements to revive a taste for occupations, which had ever afforded him more real enjoyment than any others. Although he had been able to exercise a partial supervision over his private affairs, yet he found, that, after an absence of eight years, much was to be done to repair his houses, restore his farms to the condition in which he had left them. and complete his favorite system of agriculture. To these employments he devoted himself with as lively an interest, as if nothing had occurred to interrupt them.

In writing to a friend, a few weeks after he arrived at Mount Vernon, he said that he be-

gan his daily course with the rising of the sun, and first made preparations for the business of the day. "By the time I have accomplished these matters," he adds, "breakfast is ready. This being over, I mount my horse and ride round my farms, which employs me until it is time to dress for dinner, at which I rarely miss to see strange faces come as they say out of respect to me. And how different is this from having a few social friends at a cheerful board. The usual time of sitting at table, a walk, and tea, bring me within the dawn of candlelight; previous to which, if not prevented by company, I resolve, that, as soon as the glimmering taper supplies the place of the great luminary, I will retire to my writing-table, and acknowledge the letters I have received. Having given you this history of a day, it will serve for a year." And in this manner a year passed away, and with no other variety than that of the change of visiters, who came from all parts to pay their respects or gratify their curiosity.

But, in the midst of these scenes, it once more became his duty to yield to the claim of his country. The French Directory had rejected the overtures for a reconciliation, and committed outrages and insults against the

United States, which no independent nation could bear. Mr. Pinckney, the American plenipotentiary, had been treated with indignity, first by a refusal to receive him as minister, and next by an order to leave the territories of the Republic. At the same time, depredations were made upon American commerce by French cruisers, in violation of the treaty which had subsisted between the two nations. President Adams summoned Congress, submitted the subject to them, and recommended preparations for military defence. That no method might be left unattempted for bringing about a reconciliation and insuring peace, two envoys extraordinary, John Marshall and Elbridge Gerry, were sent out to join Mr. Pinckney. The three envoys proceeded to Paris, but their mission was unsuccessful.

It seems that the rulers of France had been deceived into a belief, that the people of the United States would not sustain their government in a war against that country. The opposition shown to the British treaty had contributed to foster this delusion; and indeed the conduct of the French ministers in the United States, from the time Genêt arrived at Charleston, had clearly indicated a design to separate the people from the government.

Such was the confidence of the Executive Directory in this hope, and such their ignorance of the American character, that they had the effrontery to demand money of the envoys as a preliminary to any negotiation for settling the differences between the two nations. This demand was made under the pretence of a redress of grievances, in consequence, as it was alleged, of the unfavorable operation of the British treaty, and of the system of neutrality adopted by the American government. So degrading a proposal could not of course be regarded in any other light than as an insult.

Nothing now remained to be done but to prepare for war. Congress authorized the President to enlist ten thousand men, as a provisional army, and to call them into actual service, if war should be declared against the United States, or whenever in his opinion there should be danger of an invasion.

As soon as it was foreseen, that a resort to arms might be necessary, all eyes were turned upon Washington as the individual to be placed at the head of the army. The weight of his name was of the utmost importance to produce unanimity in the leaders, and secure the confidence and support of the people. "You ought to be aware," said Hamilton, in

writing to him, "that, in the event of an open rupture with France, the public voice will again call you to command the armies of your country; and, though all who are attached to you will from attachment, as well as public considerations, deplore an occasion, which should once more tear you from that repose to which you have so good a right, yet it is the opinion of all those with whom I converse, that you will be compelled to make the sacrifice. All your past labors may demand, to give them efficacy, this further, this very great sacrifice." The President also wrote to him; "We must have your name, if you will permit us to use it. There will be more efficacy in it than in many an army." This letter was written before any appointments had been made. The following is an extract from Washington's reply.

"From a view of the past and the present, and from the prospect of that which seems to be expected, it is not easy for me to decide satisfactorily on the part it might best become me to act. In case of actual invasion by a formidable force, I certainly should not intrench myself under the cover of age and retirement, if my services should be required by my country to assist in repelling it. And, if there be good cause, which must be better

known to the government than to private citizens, to expect such an event, delay in preparing for it might be dangerous, improper, and not to be justified by prudence. The uncertainty, however, of the event, in my mind, creates my embarrassment; for I cannot fairly bring it to believe, regardless as the French are of treaties and of the laws of nations, and capable as I conceive them to be of any species of despotism and injustice, that they will attempt to invade this country, after such a uniform and unequivocal expression of the sense of the people in all parts to oppose them with their lives and fortunes."

Before receiving this reply, the President had nominated him to the Senate as Commander-inchief of the armies of the United States. The nomination was unanimously confirmed on the 3d of July, the day after it was made. The Secretary of War was despatched in person to Mount Vernon, as the bearer of the commission. Washington accepted the appointment, with two reservations; first, that the principal officers should be such as he approved; secondly, that he should not be called into the field, till the army was in a condition to require his presence, or till it became necessary by the urgency of circumstances. He added, however, that he did not mean to withhold

any assistance he could afford in arranging and organizing the army; and, in conformity with the rule he had always followed, he declined receiving any part of the emoluments annexed to his appointment, until he should be in a situation to incur expense.

There was much embarrassment in appointing the principal officers. Some of those, who had served in the Revolution, were prominent candidates for appointments in the new army. It became a question, whether their former rank should be taken into account. If this were decided in the affirmative, it would deprive the army of the services of men, whose talents, activity, and influence were of the greatest moment, but who would not accept subordinate places. It was the opinion of Washington, that, since the old army had long been disbanded, and a new one was now to be formed upon different principles and for a different object, no regard ought to be paid to former rank, but that the best men should be selected, and so arranged as most effectually to promote the public good. This opinion prevailed.

The inspector-general was to be the second in command, and there were to be likewise two major-generals. For these offices Washington proposed Alexander Hamilton, Charles

Cotesworth Pinckney, and Henry Knox, who were to rank in the order in which their names here stand. They were thus appointed. The President was not satisfied with the arrangement. His choice for the inspector-general rested upon Knox, but he acquiesced in the decision of Washington. Unfortunately General Knox was displeased with the arrangement, and declined accepting his commission. He believed that his former services gave him higher claims, than could be advanced for the two younger officers who were placed over him.

From this time to the end of his life a great part of Washington's attention was taken up with the affairs of the new army. His correspondence with the Secretary of War, the major-generals, and other officers, was unremitted and very full, entering into details and communicating instructions, which derived value from his long experience and perfect knowledge of the subject. His letters during this period, if not the most interesting to many readers, will ever be regarded as models of their kind, and as affording evidence that the vigor and fertility of his mind had not decreased with declining years. He passed a month at Philadelphia, where he was assiduously employed with Generals Hamilton and

Pinckney in making arrangements for raising and organizing the army. After the plan was finished, he applied himself, with all the ardor of his younger days, to effect its execution.

He never seriously believed, that the French would go to the extremity of invading the United States. But it had always been a maxim with him, that a timely preparation for war afforded the surest means of preserving peace; and on this occasion he acted with as much promptitude and energy, as if the invaders had been actually on the coast. His opinion proved to be correct, and his prediction was verified. When it was discovered, that a war with the United States would not be against the government alone, but that the whole people would rise to resist aggression and maintain their rights and dignity as a nation, the French rulers relaxed into a more pacific temper. Intimations were given by them of a willingness to coöperate in effecting a friendly and equitable adjustment of existing differences. Listening to these overtures, the President again appointed three envoys extraordinary, and invested them with full powers to negotiate with the French government. When they arrived in Paris, they found Bonaparte at the head of affairs, who, having taken no part in the preceding disputes, and perceiving no advantage in continuing them, readily assented to an accommodation. No event was more desired by Washington, but he did not live to participate in the joy with which the intelligence was received by his countrymen.

Since his retirement from the Presidency, his health had been remarkably good; and. although age had not come without its infirmities, yet he was able to endure fatigue and make exertions of body and mind with scarcely less ease and activity, than he had done in the prime of his strength. On the 12th of December he spent several hours on horseback, riding to his farms, and giving directions to his managers. He returned late in the afternoon, wet and chilled with the rain and sleet, to which he had been exposed while riding home. The water had penetrated to his neck, and snow was lodged in the locks of his hair. A heavy fall of snow the next day prevented his going abroad, except for a short time near his house. A sore throat and hoarseness convinced him, that he had taken cold; but he seemed to apprehend no danger from it. He passed the evening with the family, read the newspapers, and conversed cheerfully till his usual hour for going to rest.

In the night he had an ague, and before the dawn of day the next morning, which was

Saturday, the 14th, the soreness in his throat had become so severe, that he breathed and spoke with difficulty. At his request he was bled by one of his overseers, and in the mean time a messenger went for Dr. Craik, who lived nine miles off, at Alexandria. As no relief was obtained by bleeding, and the symptoms were such as to alarm the family, another messenger was despatched for Dr. Brown, who resided nearer Mount Vernon. These physicians arrived in the morning, and Dr. Dick in the course of the day. All the remedies, which their united counsel could devise, were used without effect.

His suffering was acute and unabated through the day, but he bore it with perfect composure and resignation. Towards evening he said to Dr. Craik; "I die hard, but I am not afraid to die. I believed from my first attack, that I should not survive it. My breath cannot last long." From that time he said little, except to thank the physicians for their kindness, and request they would give themselves no more trouble, but let him die quietly. Nothing further was done, and he sank gradually till between ten and eleven o'clock at night, when he expired, in the sixty-eighth year of his age, and in the full possession of his mental faculties; exhibiting in this short

and painful illness, and in his death, the same example of patience, fortitude, and submission to the Divine will, which he had shown in all the acts of his life. On Wednesday, the 18th of December, his remains were deposited in the family tomb at Mount Vernon.

Congress was at this time in session at Philadelphia; and, when the news of the melancholy event arrived at the seat of government, both houses immediately adjourned for the remainder of the day. The next morning, as soon as the House of Representatives had convened, Mr. Marshall, afterwards Chief Justice, rose in his place, and addressed the Speaker in an eloquent and pathetic speech, briefly recounting the public acts of Washington. He then offered three resolutions, previously prepared by General Henry Lee, which were accepted. By these it was proposed, that the house should in a body wait on the President to express their condolence; that the Speaker's chair should be shrouded in black, and the members and officers of the house be dressed in black, during the session; and that a committee, in conjunction with a committee from the Senate, should be appointed "to consider on the most suitable manner of paying honor to the memory of the man, first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his fellow citizens."

The Senate testified their respect and sorrow by similar proceedings. A joint committee of the two houses was appointed, who reported resolutions recommending, that a marble monument should be erected to commemorate the great events in the military and political life of Washington; that an oration, suited to the occasion, should be pronounced in the presence of both houses of Congress; that the people of the United States should wear crape on the left arm thirty days as a badge of mourning; and that the President, in the name of Congress, should be requested to write a letter of condolence to Mrs. Washington. These resolutions were unanimously adopted. The funeral ceremonies were appropriate and solemn. A discourse was delivered on the occasion by General Lee, then a representative in Congress.

But no formal act of the national legislature was required to stir up the hearts of the people, or to remind them of the loss they had sustained in the death of a man, whom they had so long been accustomed to love and revere, and the remembrance of whose deeds and virtues was so closely connected with that of their former perils, and of the causes of

their present prosperity and happiness. The mourning was universal. It was manifested by every token, which could indicate the public sentiment and feeling. Orators, divines, journalists, and writers of every class, responded to the general voice in all parts of the country, and employed their talents to solemnize the event, and to honor the memory of him, who, more than any other man, of ancient or modern renown, may claim to be called The Father of his Country.

The person of Washington was commanding, graceful, and fitly proportioned; his stature six feet, his chest broad and full, his limbs long and somewhat slender, but well shaped and muscular. His features were regular and symmetrical, his eyes of a light blue color, and his whole countenance, in its quiet state, was grave, placid, and benignant. When alone, or not engaged in conversation, he appeared sedate and thoughtful; but, when his attention was excited, his eye kindled quickly and his face beamed with animation and intelligence. He was not fluent in speech, but what he said was apposite, and listened to with the more interest as being known to come from the heart. He seldom attempted sallies of wit or humor, but no man received more pleasure from an exhibition of them by others; and,

although contented in seclusion, he sought his chief happiness in society, and participated with delight in all its rational and innocent amusements. Without austerity on the one hand, or an appearance of condescending familiarity on the other, he was affable, courteous, and cheerful; but it has often been remarked, that there was a dignity in his person and manner, not easy to be defined, which impressed every one that saw him for the first time with an instinctive deference and awe. This may have arisen in part from a conviction of his superiority, as well as from the effect produced by his external form and deportment.

The character of his mind was unfolded in the public and private acts of his life; and the proofs of his greatness are seen almost as much in the one as the other. The same qualities, which raised him to the ascendency he possessed over the will of a nation as the commander of armies and chief magistrate, caused him to be loved and respected as an individual. Wisdom, judgment, prudence, and firmness were his predominant traits. No man ever saw more clearly the relative importance of things and actions, or divested himself more entirely of the bias of personal interest, partiality, and prejudice, in discriminating be-

tween the true and the false, the right and the wrong, in all questions and subjects that were presented to him. He deliberated slowly, but decided surely; and, when his decision was once formed, he seldom reversed it, and never relaxed from the execution of a measure till it was completed. Courage, physical and moral, was a part of his nature; and, whether in battle or in the midst of popular excitement, he was fearless of danger and regardless of consequences to himself.

His ambition was of that noble kind, which aims to excel in whatever it undertakes, and to acquire a power over the hearts of men by promoting their happiness and winning their affections. Sensitive to the approbation of others and solicitous to deserve it, he made no concessions to gain their applause, either by flattering their vanity or vielding to their caprices. Cautious without timidity, bold without rashness, cool in counsel, deliberate but firm in action, clear in foresight, patient under reverses, steady, persevering, and self-possessed, he met and conquered every obstacle that obstructed his path to honor, renown, and success. More confident in the uprightness of his intentions, than in his resources, he sought knowledge and advice from other men. He chose his counsellors with unerring sagacity;

and his quick perception of the soundness of an opinion, and of the strong points in an argument, enabled him to draw to his aid the best fruits of their talents, and the light of their collected wisdom.

His moral qualities were in perfect harmony with those of his intellect. Duty was the ruling principle of his conduct; and the rare endowments of his understanding were not more constantly tasked to devise the best methods of effecting an object, than they were to guard the sanctity of conscience. No instance can be adduced, in which he was actuated by a sinister motive, or endeavored to attain an end by unworthy means. Truth, integrity, and justice were deeply rooted in his mind; and nothing could rouse his indignation so soon, or so utterly destroy his confidence, as the discovery of the want of these virtues in any one whom he had trusted. Weaknesses, follies, indiscretions, he could forgive; but subterfuge and dishonesty he never forgot, rarely pardoned. He was candid and sincere, true to his friends, and faithful to all, neither practising dissimulation, descending to artifice, nor holding out expectations which he did not intend should be realized. His passions were strong, and sometimes they broke out with vehemence, but he had the power of checking them in an instant. Perhaps self-control was the most remarkable trait of his character. It was in part the effect of discipline; yet he seems by nature to have possessed this power to a degree which has been denied to other men.

A Christian in faith and practice, he was habitually devout. His reverence for religion is seen in his example, his public communications, and his private writings. He uniformly ascribed his successes to the beneficent agency of the Supreme Being. Charitable and humane, he was liberal to the poor, and kind to those in distress. As a husband, son, and brother, he was tender and affectionate. Without vanity, ostentation, or pride, he never spoke of himself or his actions, unless required by circumstances which concerned the public interests. As he was free from envy, so he had the good fortune to escape the envy of others, by standing on an elevation which none could hope to attain. If he had one passion more strong than another, it was love of his country. The purity and ardor of his patriotism were commensurate with the greatness of its object. Love of country in him was invested with the sacred obligation of a duty; and from the faithful discharge of this duty he never swerved for a moment, either in

thought or deed, through the whole period of his eventful career.

Such are some of the traits in the character of Washington, which have acquired or him the love and veneration of mankind. If they are not marked with the brilliancy, extravagance, and eccentricity, which in other men have excited the astonishment of the world, so neither are they tarnished by the follies nor disgraced by the crimes of those men. It is the happy combination of rare talents and qualities, the harmonious union of the intellectual and moral powers, rather than the dazzling splendor of any one trait, which constitute the grandeur of his character. If the title of great man ought to be reserved for him, who cannot be charged with an indiscretion or a vice, who spent his life in establishing the independence, the glory, and durable prosperity of his country, who succeeded in all that he undertook, and whose successes were never won at the expense of honor, justice, integrity, or by the sacrifice of a single principle, this title will not be denied to Washington.

THE END.







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